

ESSAYS

ON THE

CHARACTERISTICS.

BY

JOHN BROWN, M.A.



LONDON,

Printed for C. DAVIS, against Gray's-Inn-Gate, Holborn,

MDCCLI.

1609/2646.



ESSAYS
ON THE
CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE
Earl of SHAFTESBURY.

- I. On RIDICULE considered as a Test
of Truth.
- II. On the Motives to VIRTUE, and the Ne-
cessity of *Religious Principle*.
- III. On *Revealed* RELIGION, and CHRISTI-
ANITY.

THE SECOND EDITION.

6524 Y B

2017218102

1717218102

1717218102

1717218102

1717218102

1717218102



T O

Ralph Allen, Esq.

S I R,

D I D this Address aim no further than at the common End of Dedicators, I should have been proud enough to have declined the Trouble, and *You* too wise to have approved this public Manner of offering it.

To praise *You*, were *impertinent*; and to tell others of my Obligations to *You*, would have the Appearance rather of *Vanity* than *Gratitude*.

THE

THE Truth is; I make free with Your Name on this Occasion, not so much to *protect* my *Book*, as to *complete* my *Argument*.

I HAVE ventured to criticize the Works of a very celebrated Writer, who took it into his Head to oppose the solid Wisdom of the *Gospel*, by the Visions of *false Philosophy*. As His, at best, is but the Cause of *Wit* and *Eloquence*, all the Support he could give it was only to tell us *how* PLATO wrote: Mine being that of *Truth*, and *Christianity*, I have the Advantage of *realizing* all I say, in bidding the World take Notice *how* YOU *live*.

IN

Dedication.

iii

IN a word; I was willing to bring the Question to a short Issue; and shew, by a *known* EXAMPLE, to what an Elevation true *Christianity* can exalt human Nature. Till therefore philosophic *Taste* can produce a parallel Effect, *Religion* must bear the *Palm*; and CHRISTIANITY, like her *Parent* WISDOM, *will be justified of her Children.*

I am, S I R,

Your most obliged,

humble Servant,

JOHN BROWN.

CONTENTS.

ESSAY I.

*On RIDICULE considered as a Test
of Truth.*

SECT.

I. *VINDICATION of the noble
Writer's Zeal for Freedom.*

Page 1.

II. *Of his Method of treating the Question
concerning Ridicule.*

p. 7.

III. *Of the different Kinds of Composition;
Poetry, Eloquence, and Argument.*

p. 12.

IV. *That Ridicule is a Species of Elo-
quence.*

p. 41.

V. *A Confirmation of the foregoing Truths
by an Appeal to Fact.*

p. 48.

VI. *Of the noble Writer's Arguments in
support of his new Theory; particu-
larly the Case of SOCRATES.*

p. 54.

a

VII. *His*

vi C O N T E N T S.

SECT.

VII. *His further Reasonings examined.*

page 64.

VIII. *Of his main Argument ; relating to
Protestantism and Christianity.*

P. 74.

IX. *Of the Opinion of GORGIAS quoted by
his Lordship from ARISTOTLE.*

p. 81.

X. *The Reasoning of one of his Followers
in this Subject, examined.* p. 88.

XI. *Of the particular Impropriety of ap-
plying Ridicule to the Investigation
of religious Truth.* p. 99.

ESSAY II.

*On the Motives to V I R T U E, and
the Necessity of Religious Prin-
ciple.*

SECT.

I. *Introduction.*

page 109.

II. *That the Definitions which Lord
SHAFTESBURY, and several other
Moralists have given of Virtue, are
inadequate and defective.* p. 111.

III. *Of the real Nature of Virtue.* p. 123.

IV. *Of*

C O N T E N T S. vii

SECT.

- IV. *Of an Objection urged by Dr. MANDEVILLE against the permanent Reality of Virtue.* page 137.
- V. *Examination and Analysis of The Fable of the Bees.* p. 146.
- VI. *Of the natural Motives to virtuous Action.* p. 158.
- VII. *How far these Motives can in Reality influence all Mankind. The Errors of the Stoic and Epicurean Parties; and the most probable Foundation of these Errors.* p. 167.
- VIII. *The noble Writer's additional Reasonings examined; and shewn to be without Foundation.* p. 187.
- IX. *That the religious Principle, or Obedience to the Will of God, can alone produce a uniform and permanent Motive to Virtue. The noble Writer's Objections examined.* p. 206.
- X. *Of the Efficacy of the religious Principle. Conclusion.* p. 223.

viii C O N T E N T S.

ESSAY III.

On Revealed RELIGION, and
CHRISTIANITY.

SECT.

- I. *Of the noble Writer's Manner of treating Christianity.* page 241.
- II. *Of his Objections to the Truths of natural Religion.* p. 245.
- III. *Of the Credibility of the Gospel-History.* p. 256.
- IV. *Of the Scripture-Miracles.* p. 271.
- V. *Of Enthusiasm.* p. 294.
- VI. *Of the religious and moral Doctrines of Christianity.* p. 314.
- VII. *Of several detached Passages in the Characteristics.* p. 349.
- VIII. *Of the Style and Composition of the Scriptures.* p. 371.
- IX. *Of the noble Writer's Treatment of the English Clergy.* p. 391.



ESSAYS

ON THE

Characteristics, etc.

ESSAY I.

On Ridicule, considered as a Test
of Truth.

SECTION I.

IT hath been the Fate of Lord SHAFTES-
BURY's *Characteristicks*, beyond that of I.
most other Books, to be idolized by one
Party, and detested by another. While
the first regard it as a Work of *perfect Ex-*
cellence, as containing every Thing that can
render Mankind wise and happy; the lat-
ter are disposed to rank it among the most
pernicious of Writings, and brand it as one
B conti-

S E C T. continued Heap of *Fustian*, *Scurrility*, and
 I. *Falsehood*.

THIS Circumstance hath always appeared to me a Demonstration, that Passion and Prejudice have had a greater Share than Reason, in deciding upon the Merits of this Work; which many read with Displeasure, more with Admiration, but few with impartial Judgment. 'Tis probable, the Truth lies between the two Extremes of these discordant Opinions: and that the noble Writer hath mingled Beauties and Blots, Faults and Excellencies, with a liberal and unsparing Hand.

THESE, so far as they relate to *Religion* and *Morals*, it is my present Intention to point out, without Regard to the bigoted Censures of his Friends or Enemies: While I foresee, that some will *frown* upon me for allowing him any Thing, and others treat me with a *contemptuous Smile* for presuming to differ with him at all.

THE first Thing that occurs to an unprejudiced Mind, in the perusal of the *Characteristics*, is that generous Spirit of *Freedom* which shines throughout the whole. The noble Author every where asserts that natural Privilege of Man, which hath been
 so



so often denied him, of seeing with his own S E C T.
Eyes, and judging by his own Reason. It I.
may possibly appear strange to some, why
he should so extremely labour a Point so
plain. But in Justice to his Lordship these
Gentlemen must remember, or be informed,
that in former Times, some well-designing
Men among ourselves, from a groundless
Dread of an unlimited Freedom of the
Press, attempted to make a most unnatural
and cruel Separation between *Truth* and
Liberty. Having shaken off the Corrup-
tions of *Popery*, and established what they
thought a pure and perfect System, they un-
happily stopped short in their full Carrier of
Glory; preposterously attempting to deprive
others of that common Privilege which they
had so nobly exercised themselves. This
mistaken Spirit seemed entirely subdued by
the excellent LOCKE, and others, about the
Time of the Revolution: But at the Period
when our noble Author wrote, it not only
revived, but was heightened by a terrible
Accession of Bitterness and Rancour. Hence
those frequent Sallies of Invective, which he
throws out against this intolerant Principle,
which he justly stigmatizeth as equally im-
politic, irrational, and unchristian.

S E C T.

I.

'Tis the Glory of our Days, that this accursed Spirit of Persecution is at least dying away. What Pity that we cannot add, it is wholly extinguished ! It is true, we most of us profess ourselves Friends to a Freedom of Inquiry, *in the main*. But why, *in the main* ? Why that needless Circumstance of Hesitation ? Would we embrace Error ? Or do we think that Truth can suffer by the most rigid Scrutiny ? On the contrary, not only the Perfection, but the very Being of Knowledge depends on the Exercise of Freedom. For whatever some may fear from an open and unlimited Enquiry, it seems evidently the only Means vouchsafed us for the Attainment of Truth. The *Abuse* of it may be *hurtful*, but the *Want* of it is *fatal*. Such, indeed, are the clear and undoubted Principles of our Religion : Neither sure can these Declarations surprize us. For if human and political Establishments had been sacred or inviolable, where had been our *Protestantism* ; nay, where our *Christianity* ? Dare we then to desert or discountenance a Principle, on which not only the Purity, but the very Existence of our Religion depends ? Nor is this Principle less consonant with the strictest Reason. It is

Essay on RIDICULE.

5

is Falsehood only that loves and retires into ^{SECT.}
Darkness. Truth delights in the Day ; and ^{I.}
demands no more than a just Light, to appear in perfect Beauty. A rigid Examination is its only Test: For Experience hath taught us, that even *Obstinacy* and *Error* can endure the *Fires* of Persecution: But it is genuine Truth, and that alone, which comes out pure and *unchanged* from the *severer Tortures* of Debate.

IT will ever be our truest Praise therefore, to join the noble Apologist in his Encomiums on *Freedom* ; the only permanent Basis on which *Religion* or *Virtue* can be established. Nor can we less approve his frequent Recommendations of *Politeness*, *Chearfulness*, and *Good-humour*, in the Prosecution of our most important Enquiries. The morose, contemptuous, and surly Species of Composition is generally an Appendage to Bigotry, as appears in Instances innumerable, both among the mistaken Friends and Enemies of Religion. On the contrary, the amiable Qualities of Chearfulness and Good-humour, cast a Kind of Sunshine over a Composition, and naturally engage us in Favour of the Writer. They resemble that gentle Smile that often lights

S E C T. I. up the human Countenance, the never-failing Indication of a humane Temper. How naturally then must we be disposed to listen ; how open our Minds to receive Conviction, when we perceive our Opponent's Intention is benevolent : When we perceive that his Aim is not *Victory*, but *Information* : that he means not to *insult*, but to *instruct* us.

So far, out of an unfeigned Regard to Truth, it should be my Boast to take Party with the noble Writer : On the same Principle it will now be necessary to depart from him. For, not content with establishing the free Exercise of Reason, and the Way of Chearfulness, in treating the Subjects of Religion and Morals ; he revolts from the Principle on which the rational Advocates for Religion were willing to have joined him, and appeals to a new Test, *the Test of Ridicule*. This, in his two first Treatises, he attempts to establish as a surer Method of Conviction : And *that* Ridicule, which had hitherto been employed in *disgracing known Falsehood*, he informs us, may be successfully applied to the *Investigation of unknown Truth*.

HE

Essay on RIDICULE.

7

HE hath gained a numerous Train of S E C T.
Followers in this new Opinion : It may be I.
therefore necessary to examine its Foundations.

S E C T I O N II.

'TIS great Pity the noble Author hath S E C T.
not condescended to a little more *Precision* II.
in treating the Question now before us. He indulges the Gaiety of Spirit, the Freedom of *Wit* and *Humour* so far, that a Reader, who seeks Information rather than Amusement, is often at a Loss to know where his Argument, or even his Opinion, lies. This, no doubt, was in Part owing to a generous Abhorrence of that *Pedantry*, which he takes all Occasions of exposing to Contempt. Yet a better Reason may possibly be alledged : For in recommending the *Use of Ridicule*, what could be more natural and proper than the *Power of Ridicule* itself ? To draw a striking Picture of demure Folly and solemn Imposture, was a Master-piece of Prudence : But to have argued *seriously*, would have destroyed his Argument : It had been a tacit Confession, that there is a deeper Foundation, on which

S E C T. II. Ridicule itself must rest, he must therefore have overturned, even while he intended to establish this new Pillar, and *Ground of Truth*.

HERE then we discover why the noble Author is so witty in Defence of Wit, and chuses to maintain the Cause of Raillery by Raillery itself. He smiles at his Adversary, who had attempted to find Coherence in his first Letter^a. He glories in being an Adventurer in the Way of *Miscellany*; where “Cuttings and Shreds of Learning, “with various Fragments and Points of “Wit are drawn together and tacked in “any fantastic Form. Where the Wild “and Whimfical, under the Name of the “Odd and Pretty, succeed in the Room of “the Graceful and Beautiful: Where Justness and Accuracy of Thought are set “aside, as too constraining, and of too “painful an Aspect, to be endured in the “agreeable and more easy Commerce of “Gallantry and modern Wit^b.” Hence with Reason he proceeds to his Conclusion, that “Grounds and Foundations are of no “Moment, in a Kind of Work, which, ac-

^a Vol. iii. p. 18, 20.

^b Ibid. p. 5, &c.

“ cording to modern Establishment, has SECT.
 “ properly neither *Top* nor *Bottom*, *Begin-* II.
 “ *ning* nor *End*.”

IT must be confessed, that in the Conduct of the literary Warfare, they who depend on the Regularity and Force of *Arguments*, have but a sorry Chance against these nimble Adventurers in the *Sallies* of Wit and Ridicule; these *Hussars* in Disputation, who confide more in their Agility, than Strength or Discipline; and by sudden *Evolutions* and timely *Skulking*, can do great Mischiefs, without receiving any. Ill qualified, indeed, is the *saturnine* Complexion of the dry *Reasoner*, to cope with this *mercurial* Spirit of modern *Wit*: The Formalist is under a double Difficulty; not only to *conquer* his Enemy, but to *find* him. Though it must be owned, the Search is a harder Task than the *Victory*; and more mortifying, as it ends in shewing us that this redoubted Figure of *Ridicule*, armed at all Points like *Reason*, is no other than an airy Phantom, tricked up by the Goddesses of Folly, to confound formal Wisdom; as that other in the Poet, to mislead his Hero:

‘Vol. iii. p. 8.

Tum

SECT. Tum dea nube cava *tenuem sine viribus umbram*

II.

In faciem Æneæ (visu mirabile monstrum)

Dardaniis ornat telis : clypeumque, jubaſque

Divini aſſimilat capitis ; dat inania verba,

Dat ſine mente ſonum, grefſuſque effingit euntis.

Illum autem abſentem Æneas in prælia poſcit.

Tunc levis haud ultra latebras jam quærit imago,

Sed ſublime volans, nubi ſe immiſcuit atræ^d.

SINCE, therefore, the noble Writer declines treating this Subject in the Way of cloſe Argument ; we muſt take our Chance with him upon the Terms he hath been pleaſed to preſcribe. We muſt be content to go a *Gleaning* for his Opinions, and *pick them up* as they lie thinly ſcattered through a wide Extent of Pages.

BUT, however his Lordſhip's high Quality may exempt him from the eſtabliſhed Forms of Argument, it were the Height of Imprudence in Writers of inferior Rank, to attempt an Imitation of his peculiar Manner. His delicate Raillery, therefore, will beſt be repayed by ſober Reasoning. This, ſure, his moſt zealous Admirers cannot take amiſs : It is the noble Author's allowed Maxim, that "a Jeſt, which will not bear a
" ſerious Examination, is certainly falſe
" Wit^e." Neither was he a Stranger to

^d Virg. Æn. x. v 636, &c.

^e Vol. i. p. 74.

Essay on RIDICULE.

II

the methodical Species of Composition : As ^{SECT.}
appears from his Enquiry concerning Vir- II.
tue ; where he proceeds with a Pace equal-
ly regular and majestic. Indeed should we
form our Idea of him from the Attitudes
in which his sorry Mimics present him to
our View, we should see him labouring
through a confused Mass of Words and
random Half-meanings, entangled in his
own Argument, and throwing himself into
every unnatural and aukward Posture, to
make his Way, though in vain, into Sense.
But this is a very bad Picture of the noble
Author : Though it be all his affected Ad-
mirers can exhibit of him in their own
Productions. Deformities are easily copied ;
True Features and graceful Attitudes are
caught by the Hand of a *Master* only.
And in Reality, none ever knew the Value
of Order and Proportion better than Lord
SHAFTESBURY. He knew that Confusion
can only tend to *disgrace* Truth, or *disguise*
Falsehood. Method, indeed, may dege-
nerate into Stiffness, but to despise Order,
is the silliest *Affectation*. Especially when
the slovenly and confused Form of the Com-
position pretends to the Character of *Ele-
gance*,

SECT. *gance*, it becomes of all others the grossest
 II. and most contemptible Pedantry,

SECTION III.

SECT. THE divine Author of our Being having
 III. given us several different Powers, *Sense*, *Imagination*, *Memory*, and *Reason*, as the Inlets, Preservers, and Improvers of Knowledge; it may be proper here briefly to remark their respective Provinces. As the *Senses* are the Fountains whence we derive all our Ideas; so these are infinitely combined and associated by the *Imagination*: *Memory* preserves these Assemblages of Things: *Reason* compares, distinguishes, and separates them: By this Means determining their Differences, and pointing out which are *real*, and which *fictitious*.

THE *Passions* are no more than the several Modes of Pleasure and Pain, to which the Author of Nature hath wisely subjected us, for our own and each others Preservation.

“ Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure’s smiling
 “ Train;

“ Hate, Fear, and Grief, the Family of Pain”.
 To

To these we may add two more of a mixed ^{SECT.}
Kind, *Pity* and *Contempt*, which seem to III.
partake of both Pain and Pleasure.

As the *Senses* and *Imagination* are the Sources of all our Ideas, it follows that they are the Sources of all our Modes of Pleasure and Pain: That is, of all our *Passions*. Nor is any *Passion* *strongly excited* in the Soul by mere Knowledge only, till the *Imagination* hath formed to itself some Kind of *Picture* or *Representation* of the Good or Evil apprehended. Thus ARISTOTLE justly defines Fear to be a Kind of Pain arising from the *Phantasy* or *Appearance* of future Evil^f. Consistently with this, he again truly observes, that though all Men know they must die, yet, while *Death* is at a Distance, they never think of it^g. The same may be observed concerning the Belief of *future Existence*; which never sways the Conduct of Mankind, till the *Imagination* is strongly *impressed* by steady and repeated Contemplation.

^f Εστω δε φόβος, λυπη τις η ταραχη εκ ΦΑΝΤΑΣΙΑΣ μελλοντος κακου. Arist. Rhet. l. ii. c. 5.

^g Ισασι γαρ παντες, οτι αποθανουνται: αλλ' οτι ουκ εγγυς, ουδεν φροντιζουσιν. Ib. l. ii. c. 5.

SECT.
III.

As therefore it appears to be the Province of *Sense* and *Imagination* to present and associate Ideas, but not to mark their real Differences; and as the Passions are always excited according to the Suggestions of these two Powers; it follows, that *apparent*, not *real* Good and Evil, are universally the Objects of all our Passions. Thus the respective Objects of Joy, Fear, Anger, are apparent Good, apparent Danger, apparent Injury. Universally, whether the Object be real or fictitious, while it is *apparent* (that is, while the Imagination represents it as *real*) it will produce its relative Passion.

It is the Province of *Reason* alone, to *correct* the Passions. Imagination and Passion can never correct themselves. Every Assemblage of Ideas, every Impression made upon them, hath an Object *apparently real*: Therefore without the Aids of *Reason*, the *active* and *separating* Power, the Mind can never distinguish *real* from *fictitious* Objects. Again, as it is the Province of Reason only, thus to regulate the Senses and Imagination, and to determine when they impress a Truth, or suggest a Falsehood: so it is no less the Province of the same corrective Power, to
deter-

determine concerning the Modes of *appa-*^{SECT.}
rent Good and Evil, and thus to fix both III.
our *Opinions* and *Passions* on their proper
Objects^h.

UPON this just Dependance of Imagination and Passion on the superior and leading Faculty of Reason, the whole Weight of this Question concerning the Application and Use of *Ridicule* depends. But that we may obtain as wide a View as possible of our Subject, it may be proper to ascertain the Nature, Limits, and Ends of the different Kinds of literary Composition, which take their Rise from these three different Powers, as they subsist in Man. Thus we shall discover, to which of them *the Way of Ridicule* is to be referred, and determine how far

^h Some of these Truths are both finely and philosophically expressed by our great Poet in the following Passage:

But know, that in the Soul
Are many lesser Faculties, that serve
Reason as chief: Among these, Fancy next
Her Office holds: Of all external Things
Which the five watchful Senses represent,
She forms Imaginations, aery Shapes,
Which Reason joining or dis-joining, frames,
All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
Our Knowledge, or Opinion.

Parad. Lost, B. v. ♫ 100, &c.

SECT. it may, or may not, with Propriety be re-
 III. garded as a *Test of Truth*.

PERHAPS there is no Species of Writing (except only that of mere *Narration*) but what will fall under the Denomination of *Poetry, Eloquence, or Argument*. The first lays hold of the Imagination; the second, through the Imagination, seizes the Passions; the last addresseth itself to the Reason of Mankind. The immediate, *essential* End therefore of Poetry is to *please*, of Eloquence to *persuade*, of Argument to *instruct*. To this End, the Poet dwells on such Images as are *beautiful*; the Orator selects every Circumstance that is *affecting*; the Philosopher only admits what is *true*. But as all these, in their several Kinds of Writing, address themselves to *Man*, who is compounded of *Imagination, Passion, and Reason*; so they seldom confine themselves to their respective Provinces, but lay hold of each other's Art, the more effectually to gain Admission and Success to their own. Yet still, the *Masters* in these various Kinds of Composition, know how to keep their several Boundaries *distinct*; not to make unwarrantable Inroads into each other's Provinces, nor remove those Lines which Na-
 ture

ture hath prescribed: But so to limit their ^{SECT.} Excursions, that the Intelligent may always ^{III.} know what is designed, a *Poem*, an *Oration*, or an *Argument*ⁱ.

Thus the judicious Poet, though his immediate and universal Aim is beautiful Imagination, yet in order to become more *pleasing*, endeavours often to be *interesting*, always to be *rational*. His application being made to *Man*, should he let loose Imagination to its random Flights, he must shock the *Reason* of every penetrating Observer. Hence appears the Necessity of cultivating that Maxim in poetical Composition, which the two best of *French* Critics, *Boileau* and *Bouhours* have so much insisted on; “ that all
“ poetical Beauty must be founded in
“ Truth^k.” Because in the unlimited Excursions of Fancy, though one Faculty should approve, yet another is disgusted:

ⁱ Would it not carry us too far from our Subject, it might perhaps be both a new and pleasing Speculation, to point out the Writers in these several Kinds, who have been most remarkably *excellent* or *defective*, with Regard to *this just Union of these three Species of Composition*. At present it must suffice, to have hinted such a Criticism, which the Reader may easily prosecute.

^k Que si on me demande ce que cest cet agrément et ce sel—à mon avis, il consiste principalement à ne jamais presenter au lecteur que des *pensées vrais*,

C

Though

SECT. III. Though Imagination *acquiesce* in false Beauty, Reason will *reject* it with Disdain. Thus, although the primary and essential End of Poetry is to *please* by Imitation; yet as it is addressed to Man, *Instruction* makes a necessary, though an *adventitious* Part of its Character¹.

FROM this View of Things we may, in passing, further see the *Nature, Limits, and comparative Excellence* of the various Kinds of Poetry. The *Descriptive* holds entirely *et des expressions justes. Oeuvres de Boileau, tom. i. Pref. p. 29.*

Car enfin, pour vous dire un peu par ordre ce que je pense la dessus, *la verité* est la premiere qualite, et comme le fondement des pensees: les plus belles sont vicieuses; ou plutot celles qui passent pour belles, et qui semblent l'etre, ne le sont pas en effet, si ce fonds leur manque. *Bouhours, Man. de bien pens. p. II.*

¹Hence the Debate mentioned by *Strabo* (l. i.) between *Eratoſthenes*, and some of the *Ancients*, may easily be decided. The first insisting that *Pleasure*, the other that *Instruction*, was the only End of Poetry. They were both wrong: as it appears that these two Ends must always be united in some Degree. However, *Eratoſthenes* was nearer the Truth, as he alledged the *essential* End. 'Tis no bad Description, given by Mr. *Dryden*, and others, of the End of Poetry, that it is "to *instruct* by *pleasing*:" Though upon the whole, it throws more Weight on the Circumstance of *Instruction*, than the Thing will bear. Perhaps it had better been said, that it is "to *please, consistently* with *Instruction*." The Admirers of Lord S. who love pompous Declamation, may see a great deal said on this Subject, and with little Precision, in *Strada's* Third Prolution.

of

of the Imagination, and may be termed *pure* S E C T.
III.
Poetry or Imitation: Yet, with Regard to
the *secondary* End of Instruction, it seems to
merit only the lowest Place, because it is
then perfect when it satisfies the Imagina-
tion; and while it offends not Reason, or
the Affections, nothing farther with regard
to these Faculties is expected from it. The
Tragic, Comic, Satiric, and the *Elegy*, as
they chiefly regard the *Passions* and the
Heart of Man, so they draw much of their
Force from the Sources of *Eloquence*. On
the other hand, the *Didactic*, as it makes its
chief Application to Reason, though it re-
tains so much of the Graces of Imagina-
tion, as to merit the Name of Poetry, is
principally of the *logical* Species. The *Epic*,
by its great Extent, includes all these Kinds
by turns, and is therefore the *noblest*, both
in its *primary* and *secondary* Intention.
Much indeed hath been occasionally asserted
by several Writers, concerning the superior
Dignity of the *tragic* Species^m: But this
hath been more in the Way of Affirmation
than Proof. Their Opinion seems to have

^m Thus the excellent Mr. Addison: "A perfect Tra-
gedy is the noblest Production of humane Nature."
Spectator, N^o 39.

S E C T.
III.

been founded on a mistaken Interpretation of ARISTOTLE, whose supposed Authority on this Subject hath generally passed unquestioned. But whoever shall thoroughly examine the Sentiments of the *grand Master*, will find he only meant to assert, that the *Mode of Imitation* in *Tragedy* is more forcible, and therefore superior to that of the *epic* Kind; because in the *last*, the Action is only *told*, in the former, it is *visibly represented*. This is the Truth. But if we consider, not the *Mode* of Imitation, but the *Subjects* imitated; if we consider the comparative *Greatness* of the Action which these two Kinds of Poetry can comprehend; and the moral Ends of *Instruction*, no less than the Variety and Beauty of *Description*, which constitutes the very Essence of Poetry; we shall find the Epic greatly superior, on account of the Extent and Importance of those *Actions*, and the Variety of *Characters* which it is capable of involving. Thus for Instance, such an Action as the Death of OEDIPUS or CATO may be more perfectly imitated (because *visibly represented*) in Tragedy, than in the Epos: But a much greater and more extensive Action, such as the *Establishment of an Empire*, with
all

all its subordinate Episodes, religious, political, and moral, cannot be comprehended or exhibited in *Tragedy*, while yet they may be perfectly described in the *Epopée*. SECT.
III.

So much concerning *Poetry* will be found to have Relation to our Subject. But as the Question concerning *Ridicule* will turn chiefly on the proper Subordination of *Eloquence*, it will be necessary to consider this Kind of Composition in a more particular Manner.

ELOQUENCE then is no other than a Species of Poetry applied to the particular End of Persuasion. For Persuasion can only be effected by rowzing the Passions of the Soul; and these, we have seen, are only to be moved by a Force impressed on the Imagination, assuming the Appearance of Truth; which is the essential Nature of poetical Composition. Thus the Lord VERULAM: "In all Persuasions that are wrought by " Eloquence, and other Impression of like " Nature, which paint and disguise the true " Appearance of Things, the chief Recommendation unto *Reason*, is from the *Imagination*." And the judicious *Strabo*, consistently with this Theory, tells us, that

^a De Aug. Scient. l. ii.

S E C T.
III.

in Fact “ the oratorical Elocution was but
“ an Imitation of the poetical : This ap-
“ peared first, and was approved : They
“ who imitated it, took off the Measures,
“ but still preserved all the other Parts of
“ Poetry in their Writings : Such were
“ CADMUS the Milesian, PHERECYDES, and
“ HECATÆUS. Their Followers then took
“ something more from what was left, and
“ at length Elocution descended into the
“ Prose which is now among us°.

THUS as the Passions must have an *ap-
parent Object* of Good or Evil offered by the
Imagination in order to excite them ; so
Eloquence must offer *apparent Evidence*
ere it can be received and acquiesced in :
For the Mind cannot embrace known False-
hood. So that every Opinion which Elo-
quence instills, though it be the pure Result
of certain fictitious Images impressed on the
Fancy, is always regarded as the Result of
rational Conviction, and received by the
Mind as Truth.

° Πρωτιστα γὰρ ἡ ποιητικὴ καλὰ σκευὴ παρηλθεν εἰς το-
μεσον, καὶ εὐδοκίμησεν· εἶτα ἐκείνην μιμῶμενοι, λυσάντες
τὸ μέτρον, τ' ἀλλὰ δὲ φυλάξαντες τὰ ποιητικά, συνεγρά-
ψαν οἱ ποιεῖν Κάδμον, καὶ Φερεκύδην, καὶ Ἐκάλαιον· εἶτα
οἱ ὕστερον, ἀφαιρῶντες αἰετὶ τῶν τοιῶν, εἰς τὸ νῦν εἶδος
κατήγαγον ὡς ἀν' ἀποῦψος τινος. Strabo, lib. i.

HENCE we may perceive the just Foundation of the well-known Maxim in rhetorical Composition, *Artis est celare artem*. In every other Art, where the End is Pleasure, Instruction, or Admiration, the greater Art the Master displays, the more effectually he gains his Purpose. But where the End is Persuasion, the Discovery of his Art must defeat its Force and Design. For ere he can persuade, he must seem to apply to his Hearer's *Reason*, while, in Fact, he is working on his Imagination and Affections: Now this, once known, must defeat his Purpose; because nothing can persuade but what has the *Appearance of Truth*.

HENCE too we may see where the true Medium lies between the too frequent *Use*, and delicate *Avoidance* of poetical Images, in Eloquence. Metaphors, Similies, bold Figures, and glowing Expressions are proper, so far as they point the Imagination to the main Subject on which the Passion is to be excited: When they begin to *amuse*, they grow absurd. And here, by the way, lies the essential Difference between the *Epic* and *Tragic* Composition. For the *Epic*, tending chiefly to Admiration and Instruction, allows a full Display of Art: But

SECT.
III.

the *Tragic*, being of the persuasive Kind, must only regard and touch upon poetical Images in this single View, *as they tend to rouse the Passions of the Soul*. MACROBIUS^p hath collected many elegant Examples of this *poetic Elocution* from the *Eneid*: He hath ranged them in Classes, and pointed out the Fountains whence the great Poet drew his *Pathos*: And sure, it may with Truth be affirmed, that “the Master-strokes of that divine Work are rather of the *Tragic*, than the *Epic* Species.”

THESE Remarks will enable us to discover the Impropriety of an Opinion commonly held^q; “that the Reason why Eloquence had such Power, and wrought such Wonders in *Athens* and *Rome*, was, because it had become the general Taste and Study of the Times: That consequently these Cities were more sensible to its Charms, and therefore more warmly affected by it.” Now, though with regard to pure *Poetry* or strict *Argument*, where either Pleasure or Truth are the purposed Ends, this Reasoning might hold; yet, when applied to *Eloquence*, it seems to

^p Saturnal. l iv passim.
Essay on Eloquence.

^q See Mr. Hume's

be without Foundation. For where *Ignorance* is predominant, *there* any Application to the Fancy or the Passions is most likely to wear the Appearance of Reason, and therefore the most likely to persuade. As Men improve in Knowledge, such Application must proportionably lose its Force, and true Reasoning prevail. Hence it should seem, that they who make the constituent Principles of Eloquence familiar to their Imagination, must of all others be best enabled to separate *Truth* from its *Appearances*, and distinguish between *Argument* and *Colouring*. An artful Oration will indeed afford great Pleasure to one who hath applied himself to the Study of Rhetoric: Yet, not so as that he shall be *persuaded* by it: On the contrary, his Pleasure consists in a reflex Act of the Understanding; and arises from the very Circumstance which prevents Persuasion, a *Discovery of the Master's Art*.

THE true Reason therefore, why Eloquence gained such mighty Power in these famed Republics was, "because the Orators addressed themselves to the *People* as their *Judges*." Here the Art triumphed: for it had not *Reason* to instruct, but *Imagination* and *Passion* to controul. Accordingly

SECT. ly we find, that no sooner was the popular
 III. Government destroy'd, and the supreme
 Power lodged in a single Hand, than Eloquence began sensibly to languish and decay: The mighty Orators, who could sway the Passions of a mixed Multitude, found their Art baffled and overthrown when opposed to the cool Determinations of cunning Ministers, or the fantastic Will of arbitrary Masters. Thus with great Judgment, though not much Honesty, the *Roman* Poet exhorts his Countrymen to disdain the low Accomplishments of Eloquence: He knew they belonged to a Republic:

Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra—

Orabunt causas melius —

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:

Hæ tibi erunt artes^r. —

With the same Penetration he lays the Scene in a *popular Assembly*, when he gives us a Picture of Eloquence triumphant. I mean in that fine Passage where he compares NEPTUNE *stilling the Noise of the Waves*, to an *Orator appeasing the Madness of the People*:

^rEneid. l. vi.

Ac

Ac veluti *magno in populo* cum sæpe coorta est S E C T. III.
Seditio, sævitque animis *ignobile vulgus* ;

Jamque faces et saxa volant ; furor arma ministrat ;

Tum pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem

Conspexere, silent, *arrestisque auribus astant* :

Ille *regit dictis animos*, et pectora mulcet :

Sic cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor^s.—

'Tis true, we have a supposed Instance on Record, of the Power of TULLY's Eloquence, after Liberty was destroy'd, even on the great *Destroyer* himself, When we read the Oration^t, we stand amazed at its Effects : for sure there is nothing *equal* to them in the Composition itself : so that it appears an Event almost unaccountable, that CESAR, who was himself an accomplished Orator, who knew all the Windings of the Art, and was at the same Time of the most determined Spirit, should be so shaken on this Occasion as to tremble, drop his Papers, and acquit the Prisoner. Though many have attributed this to the Force of TULLY's *Elocution*^v ; it seems rather to have been the Effect of CESAR's *Art*. We

^s En. l. i.

W. Temple, Mr. Hume, &c.

^t Pro Ligario.

^v Causabon, Sir

SECT.
III.

know with what unwearied Application he courted CICCERO's Friendship ; he saw where his Vanity and his Weakness lay : With perfect Address therefore he play'd back the Orator's Art upon himself ; His Concern was *feigned*, and his Mercy *artificial* ; as he knew that nothing could so effectually win TULLY to his Party, as giving him the Pride of having *conquered* CESAR.

BUT whatever of Truth there may be in this Conjecture ; so much is evident, that the Scene where alone Eloquence can work its mighty Effects, is that of a *popular Assembly*. An absolute Monarchy quencheth it at once. Nor can public Freedom itself give it any considerable Play, where the public Freedom hath any firmer Basis, than that of a mere Democracy. For where the Councils of a Nation depend on the united Reason of elected Representatives, or provident Statesmen, though the laboured Essays of Eloquence may often *amuse*, they will seldom *determine*. This seems to be the Case of our own Age and Country : And were it necessary to enlarge on this Subject, it might be made appear, that they who complain of the Decay of public Eloquence among us, assign a Cause which hath

no

no real Existence, when they attribute that ^{S E C T. III.} Decay to a Neglect of the Art^w, while, in Fact, it necessarily arises from the ruling Principles of the Times, and the Nature of our Constitution.

THUS Eloquence gains its End of Persuasion by offering *apparent* Truth to the Imagination; as Argument gains its proper End of Conviction by offering *real* Truth to the Understanding. Mr. HOBBS seems to have been well aware of this Distinction. "This, says he, *viz.* laying Evidence before the Mind, is called *teaching*; the Hearer is therefore said to *learn*: But if there be not such Evidence, then such teaching is called *Persuasion*, and begetteth no more in the Hearer, than what is in the Speaker's *bare Opinion* *."

HERE then we perceive, that the Consequences of Eloquence, with regard to speculative *Instruction* and *Inquiry*, are of a very different Nature from those which relate to *Morals* and *Action*. To Instruction or Inquiry, every Species of Eloquence must for ever be an Enemy: For though it may lead the Mind to acquiesce in a just Opinion, yet

* See Mr. Hume's Essay on Eloquence. on Hum. Nature.

* Hobbes

SECT.
III.

it leads it to acquiesce upon a false Foundation: It puts the Hearer or Reader in the Speaker's or Writer's Power: And though he be so honest as to lead him in the Path of Truth, yet still he leads him *blind-fold*. In this Sense, and under this Limitation, Mr. LOCKE's Remark is true: "We must
 " allow that all the Art of Rhetoric, besides
 " Order and Clearness, all the artificial and
 " figurative Application of Words Elo-
 " quence hath invented, are for nothing else
 " but to *insinuate wrong Ideas, move the*
 " *Passions, and thereby mislead the Judgment,*
 " and so indeed are perfect Cheats."

BUT if we regard what is of more Importance to Man, than mere speculative Truth, I mean the *practical Ends* of human Life and moral Action; then Eloquence assumes a higher Nature: Nor is there, in this practical Sense, any necessary Connexion between *moving* the Passions, and *misleading* the Judgment. For though the Ends of Truth and Persuasion are then essentially different when the Orator strikes the Imagination with fictitious Images, in which case Falsehood becomes apparent Truth, and Eloquence the Instru-

? Locke on Hum. Und.

ment

ment of Deceit; yet the Ends of Persuasion SECT. III.
and Conviction, Opinion and Knowledge concur, when such Impressions are made on the Imagination and Passions, as consist with the Dictates of right Reason. In this case, Eloquence comes in to the Aid of Argument, and *impresses* the Truths which Logic teaches, in a warmer and more effectual Manner. It paints real Good and Evil in all the glowing Colours of Imagination, and thus inflames the Heart with double Ardor to embrace the one, and reject the other.

NAY, so far is Eloquence from being the universal Instrument of practical Deceit; that on the contrary, it should seem, the *moral* is more natural than the *immoral* Application of it. Because, ere the dishonest Application can take place, Circumstances must be wrested, and Misrepresentations imposed on the Fancy, in Opposition to Truth and Reason: Whereas in the proper Application, nothing further is necessary, than to draw out and impress those Images and Analogies of Things, which really exist in Nature.

It may be further observed, that as Eloquence is of a vague, unsteady Nature,
merely

SECT.
III.

merely relative to the Imaginations and Passions of Mankind; so there must be several Orders or Degrees of it, subordinate to each other in Dignity, yet each perfect in their Kind. The common *End* of each is Persuasion: The *Means* are different according to the various Capacities, Fancies, and Affections of those whom the Artist attempts to persuade. The pathetic Orator, who throws a *Congregation* of *Enthusiasts* into Tears and Groanings, would raise Affections of a very different Nature, should he attempt to proselyte an *English Parliament*: As on the other hand, the finest Speaker that ever commanded *the House*, would in vain point the Thunder of his Eloquence on a *Quaker-meeting*. So again, with regard to the Oratory of the *Bar*, at a *Country Assize* (for the higher Courts of Justice admit not Eloquence) it is easy to observe, what a different Tour the learned Council takes, in addressing himself to the *Judge* or *Jury*: He is well aware, that what passes with the *one* for *Argument* of Proof, would be derided by the *other* as idle *Declamation*. This Difference in the Kind, with respect to the Eloquence of the *Pulpit*, is no less remarkable

able in different Countries. Thus the very ^{SECT.} agreeable and sensible VOLTAIRE observes, ^{III.}
 that “ in *France* (*where Reasoning hath lit-*
 “ *tle Connexion with Religion*) a Sermon is a
 “ long Declamation, spoken with Rapture
 “ and Enthusiasm: That in *Italy* (*where*
 “ *Taste and Vertú give a Tincture to Super-*
 “ *stition itself*) a Sermon is a Kind of de-
 “ votional Comedy: That in *England* (*where*
 “ *Religion submits to Reason*) it is a solid
 “ Dissertation, *sometimes a dry one*, which
 “ is read to the Congregation without
 “ Action or Elocution².” And he justly
 concludes, that the Discourse which raiseth
 a French Audience to the highest Pitch of
 Devotion, would throw an *English* one into
 a Fit of Laughter.

HENCE too, and hence alone, we may
 account for a Fact, which, however, seem-
 ingly improbable, is too well-known to be
 doubted of: “ That although in *France*,
 “ the applauded Pulpit Eloquence is of the

² The Passage in the Original, is thus: “ Un sermon
 “ en France est une longue declamation scrupuleuse-
 “ ment divisée en trois points, & recitée avec enthousi-
 “ asme. En Angleterre un sermon est une dissertation
 “ solide, et quelquefois seche, qu’un homme lit au peu-
 “ ple sans geste, et sans aucune eclat de voix. En Ita-
 “ lie c’est une comedie spirituelle.”

SECT.
III.

“ *Enthusiastic*, in *England* of the severe and
 “ *rational* Species ; yet the Taste of these
 “ two Nations in Tragedy or *Theatrical*
 “ *Eloquence*, is mutually *reversed* : The
 “ *English* are enthusiastic ; the *French* se-
 “ vere and rational.” Now, though this
 Fact may carry the appearance of Self-
 contradiction, yet on the Principle here laid
 down, the known Circumstances of the two
 Kingdoms will explain it sufficiently. In
England, a general Spirit of *Reasoning* and
 Enquiry hath extinguished the natural En-
 thusiasms of the human Mind in *religious*
Subjects ; while our unrestrained Warmth
 of Imagination, and habitual Reverence for
 the noble Irregularities of SHAKESPEAR,
 concur to make us despise the rigid Laws
 of the Stage : On the contrary, in *France*,
 the Severities of the *Academy* have utterly
 quenched the high Tragic Spirit ; while, as
 yet, *religious Criticism* hath made but little
 Progress among the Subjects of the *most*
Christian King.

IN further Proof of this Principle, we
 may appeal to ancient Fact : To the Pro-
 gress of Eloquence in *Greece*. There we
 find, it first appeared, decked in all the glow-
 ing Colours of Poetry : afterwards, in an
 Age

Age of more polished Manners and extensive Knowledge, when the Rhetors attempted to carry this Kind of Eloquence to a still higher Degree, they found the Times would not bear it: They were baffled in their Attempt. As succeeding Ages grew more knowing, they grew more fastidious and refined: The Orators were obliged gradually to lower and bring down Eloquence from its high Standard: Till at length it gained a Form and Character entirely new, as we find it in XENOPHON'S chastised Manner of *Attic Elegance*^a.

To conclude with one Proof more in Favour of this Principle. It appears that these different Kinds were acknowledged sufficiently in ancient *Rome*; though the true Distinction between them seems not to have been thoroughly perceived, unless by TULLY himself. The correct and *Attic* Species having gained a Number of Admirers under the Patronage of SALLUST, who first encouraged it in *Rome*^b, many

^a See the Passage quoted above from Strabo, p. 22.

§ 3.

^b Sic *Sallustio* vigente, amputatae sententiae, et verba ante expectatum cadentia, et obscura brevitās, fuere pro cultu. Senec. Epist.

S E C T.

III.

were the Debates concerning the superior Force and Propriety of *this* or the more *elevated Manner*. The Patrons of the *Attic Style* derided CICEERO, as being *loose, tumid, and exuberant*^c: On the contrary, he too had his Partizans, who despised the calm and correct Species, as void of Energy and Power^d. Thus by overlooking the *relative Nature* of Eloquence, they mutually fell into an Extreme; both forgetting, that either of these Kinds might be of superior Propriety and Force, according to the Imaginations, Passions, and Capacities of those to whom they should be applied. But TULLY, with a superior Sagacity, saw clearly where the true Distinction lay: For, speaking of CALVUS, a Patronizer of the *Attic Manner*, he says, “ HENCE his Elo-
“ quence gained a high Reputation among
“ *the Learned and Attentive*; but among

^c Constat nec Ciceroni quidem obrectatores defuisse, quibus inflatus et tumens, nec satis pressus, supra modum exultans, et superfluens, et *parum Atticus* videretur. Dialog. apud Tacit.

^d Mihi falli multum videntur, qui solos esse Atticos credunt tenues et lucidos et significantes, sed quadam eloquentiæ frugalitate contentos, ac manum semper intra pallium continentes. Quintil.

“ *the*

“ *the Vulgar*, for whom Eloquence was chiefly formed, it was of no Esteem^e.”

SECT.
III.

Now among these several Kinds of Eloquence, Justness of Thought and Expression, striking Figures, Argument adorned with every pathetic Grace, are the Characters of the *highest*: Sophistry and Buffoonry, ambiguous and dishonest Hints, coarse Language, false and indecent Images, are the Characters of the *lowest*. Between these two Extremes, there lies a Variety of intermediate Kinds, each ascending towards the highest, in Proportion as they abound with its proper Characters. For as the Imagination and Passions are then most refined and just, when they bear to the same Point with Reason; so, that Species of Eloquence is the noblest which tends to conduct them thither^f. On this Principle, and on this

^e Sed ad *Calvum* revertamur — ejus oratio, nimia religione attenuata, doctis et attente audientibus erat illustis; à multitudine autem et à foro, cui nata eloquentia est, devorabatur. In Brut.

^f Les Egyptiens comparoient ceux qui preferent le coloris au dessein dans la peinture, à ceux qui en matiere d'eloquence et de poesie preferent les pensées brillantes aux pensées justes. Ciceron, le maitre et le modele de l'eloquence latine, a dit en appliquant sa reflection à l'orateur, que nous laissons bientôt des Tableaux qui nous attirent d'abord par la force du coloris; au lieu que

S E C T.
III.

alone, we may with Propriety and Precision determine the comparative Excellence and Dignity of those who aspire to the Palm of Eloquence. On this Principle it seems to be, that a severe, but able, Judge prefers DEMOSTHENES to TULLY^s: and on this Principle he deserves the Preference.

THUS we are at length arrived at the Point where Eloquence and Argument, Persuasion and Conviction unite; where the Orator's Art becomes subservient to the Interests of *Truth*, and only labours to adorn and recommend Her.

WE come now to the third Species of Composition, that of *Argument*: Which applying solely to the Reason of Man, and to the Proof or Investigation of Truth, is of a more simple and uncompounded Nature in its Principles, and therefore needs not to be so particularly explained. For Pleasure being the primary End of Poetry, and Persuasion that of Eloquence, the real Nature of Things is often in Part disguised, and compelled to bend to the Imagination

nous revenons toujours à ceux qui excellent par la beauté du dessein, qui est le vrai caractère de l'antique. *Sethos*, l. ii. p. 80.

^s See Dr. Swift's Letter to a young Clergyman.

and

and the Passions : But *Truth* being the End SECT. III.
of Argument, the varying Colours of Ima-
gination and Passion must be drawn off ;
and human Reason itself bend to the real,
uniform Nature of Things.

YET on this Occasion it may be proper
to remark, that the *rational Faculty* in Man
cannot be comprehensive or perfect in its
Operations, without a Union with a *strong*
Imagination. And this, not only in the Arts
of Poetry or Eloquence, but in the *severest*
Investigations of Truth. For Reason alone
cannot search out new Ideas, but only com-
pare and distinguish those which Sense and
Imagination present to her ; and the Senses
being of small Extent, Imagination is there-
fore the great universal Instrument of hu-
man Knowledge and human Action. With-
out the Aids of Imagination therefore, Rea-
son works in a contracted Sphere ; being
destitute of Materials ; unable to make the
necessary Excursions into the Immensity of
Nature ; and wanting that Power which
alone can range through the whole Extent
of created Being, and bring Home all the
possible and apparent Analogies of Things,
setting them before her discerning Eye, and
submitting them, to her sovereign Appro-
bation

SECT.
III.

bation or Dislike. From this noble Union arises that *boundless Penetration*, which so far surpasseth *mere Judgment*: and which, according as it is exerted in Poetry, Eloquence, Philosophy, Morals, or Religion, strikes into the various and untrodden Paths of Nature and Truth; forms the distinguished Names of HOMER, SHAKESPEAR, MILTON, DEMOSTHENES, TULLY, ARISTOTLE, BACON, LOCKE, BAYLE, PASCAL, NEWTON, HOOKER, BERKLEY, WARBURTON, giving that essential Superiority and Preheminence, which hath ever been, first the *Envy*, and then the *Admiration* of Mankind.

THUS as it appeared above, how necessary the Restraints of Reason are, to the Perfection of Works of Imagination; so here it is evident, that a full Union of Imagination is necessary to the perfect Operations of Reason. Taken singly, they are each *defective*: When their Powers are joined, they constitute TRUE GENIUS.

BUT, however requisite the Force of Imagination may be, to the Perfection of Reason, and the Production of *true Genius*, yet still Reason remains the superior and corrective Power: Therefore every Representation of Poetry or Eloquence, which
only

Essay on RIDICULE.

41

only apply to the Fancy and Affections, must ^{SECT.} finally be examined and decided upon, must ^{III.} be *tried, rejected, or received*, as the *reasoning Faculty* shall determine.

AND thus REASON alone is the *Detecter* of *Falsehood*, and the TEST OF TRUTH.

SECTION IV.

HE who would judge aright of the ^{SECT.} Proportions of a spacious Dome, must not ^{IV.} creep from one Corner to another by the Help of a glimmering Taper, but rather light up a central Branch, which may illuminate the whole. By doing something like this in our Remarks on the three different Kinds of Composition, we have enabled the intelligent Reader to see with ease: “That Wit, Raillery, and Ridicule, “in every Shape they can possibly assume, “are no other than so many Species of “*Poetry or Eloquence.*”

PURE *Wit*, when not applied to the Characters of Men, is properly a Species of Poetry. It amuses and delights the Imagination by those sudden Assemblages and pleasing Pictures of Things which it creates: and from every common Occasion can raise such

SECT.
IV.

such striking Appearances, as throw the most phlegmatic Tempers into a Convulsion of good-humoured Mirth, and *undesigned Laughter*.

BUT *Ridicule* or *Raillery*, which is the Subject of our Inquiry, hath a further Scope and Intention. It solely regards the Opinions, Passions, Actions, and Characters of Men: and may properly be denominated “that Species of Writing which excites
“ Contempt with Laughter.”

STILL more particularly we may observe, that as Eloquence in general is but the Application of Poetry to the End of Persuasion, so Ridicule in particular is no more than the Application of that particular Species of Poetry called Wit, to the same End of Persuasion. It tends to excite *Contempt*, in the same Manner as the other Modes of Eloquence raise Love, Pity, Terror, Rage, or Hatred, in the *Heart* of Man.

Now, that *Contempt* which certain Objects raise in the Mind, is a particular *Mode of Passion*. The Objects of this Passion are apparent *Falsehood*, *Incongruity*, *Impropriety*, or *Turpitude* of certain Kinds. But as the Object of every excited Passion must be examined by Reason ere we can determine
I whether

whether it be proper or improper, real or ^{SECT.} fictitious; so, every Object that excites ^{IV.} Contempt must fall under this general Rule.

Thus, before it can be determined whether our Contempt be *just*, Reason alone must *examine* Circumstances, separate Ideas, distinguish Truth from its Appearances, decide upon, restrain, and *correct the Passion*.

THUS *Ridicule* is no other than a *Species of Eloquence*: and accordingly we find it mentioned and expressly treated as such, by the best Writers of Antiquity. ARISTOTLE, as in every Subject, leads the Way. "As Ridicule seems to be of some Use in *pleading*, it was the Opinion of GORGIAS, that you ought to confound your Adversary's *serious Argument* by *Raillery*, and his *Raillery* by *serious Argument*. And he judged well^h." Here he first gives the Sentiments of a *Sage*; and then confirms them by his own Authority.

To offer all that TULLY hath said upon the Subject of Ridicule, would be to transcribe a considerable Part of his second Book

^h περὶ δὲ τῶν γελοίων, ἐπεὶ δὲ τίνα δοκεῖ χρῆσιν εἶχειν ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσι, καὶ δεινὴν εἶπε Γοργίας τὴν μὲν σπουδὴν διαφθεῖρειν τῶν ἐναντίων γελώϊ, τὸν δὲ γελώϊα σπουδὴν ὀρθῶς λέγων. Arist. Rhet. l. iii. c. 18.

SECT.
IV.

De Oratore. After having gone through several Topics of Rhetoric, he comes at length to this of *Ridicule*: and assigns to the elder CESAR the Task of explaining the Force and Application of this Art. In the Course of his Reasonings on this Subject, he affirms First, That Ridicule is a Branch of Eloquenceⁱ. 2dly, That certain Kinds of Turpitude or Incongruity are its proper Object^k. 3dly, That the Orator must be temperate in the Application of it^l. 4thly, That its Force may consist either in Thought or Expression, but that its Perfection lies in a Union of both^m. And lastly, That af-

ⁱ Est autem plane oratoris movere risum — Res sæpe, quas argumentis dilui non facile est, joco, risuque dissolvit.

^k Locus autem et regio quasi ridiculi, turpitudine quadam et deformitate continetur. — Nec insignis improbitas et scelere juncta, nec rursus miseria insignis agitata ridetur. — Quamobrem materies omnis ridiculorum est in istis vitiis, — quæ neque odio magno, nec misericordia maxima digna sunt.

^l In quo, non modo illud præcipitur, ne quid insulse; sed etiam, si quid perridicule possis: vitandum est oratori utrumque, ne aut scurrilis jocus sit, aut mimicus.

^m Duo sunt genera facetiarum, quorum alterum re tractatur, alterum dicto. — Nam quod quibuscunque verbis dixeris, facetum tamen est, *re* continetur: quod, mutatis verbis, salem amittit, in verbis habet leporem omnem. — maxime autem homines delectari, si quando risus conjuncte, *re*, *verboque* moveatur.

ter all, it is but the lowest Kind of Elo-^{SECT.}
quenceⁿ. IV.

QUINTILIAN builds chiefly on TULLY, when he treats of Ridicule in the sixth Book of his Institutions. He too considers it as a Branch of Eloquence, and gives Rules for its Efficacy and Restraint^o.

Now, in Consequence of these Proofs, a few Observations will naturally arise with regard to *Ridicule in particular*, similar to those which were made in the last Section, upon *Eloquence in general*.

As first: Ridicule must render every Proposition it supports *apparently true*, ere it can be received and acquiesced in. Thus every Opinion which Ridicule instills, tho' it be the pure Result of certain Images impressed on the Imagination, by which the Passion of Contempt is excited, is always

ⁿ Est, mea sententia, vel tenuissimus ingenii fructus. *De Oratore*, l. ii. *passim*.

^o Risum judicis movendo, et illos tristes solvit affectus, et animum ab intentione rerum frequenter avertit: et aliquando etiam reficit, & à satietate vel à fatigatione renovat.—Habet enim, ut *Cicero* dicit, sedem in deformitate aliqua et turpitudine.—Rerum autem sæpe, ut dixi, maximarum momenta vertit, cum odium iramque frequentissime frangat.—Ea quæ dicit vir bonus, omnia salva dignitate ac verecundia dicet: nimium enim risus pretium est, si probitatis impendio constat. *Quint. Inst.* l. vi.

S E C T.
III.

regarded as the Conviction of Reason, and received by the Mind as Truth. And thus by offering apparent Truth, Ridicule gains its End of Persuasion.

AGAIN, it may be observed, that the Consequences of Ridicule with regard to *speculative* Instruction or Inquiry, are of a very different Nature from those which relate to Morals and Action. To the first it must ever be an *Enemy*: But to the latter it may be an Enemy or Friend according as it is fairly or dishonestly applied. It comes in to the Aid of Argument, when its Impressions on the Imagination and Passions are consistent with the real Nature of Things: When it strikes the Fancy and Affections with fictitious Images, it becomes the Instrument of Deceit.

THUS Ridicule may befriend either Truth or Falsehood; and as it is morally or immorally applied, may illustrate the one, or disguise the other. Yet it should seem, that the moral is more natural, than the immoral Application of Ridicule; inasmuch as Truth is more congenial to the Mind than Falsehood, and so, the *real* more easily made *apparent*, than the *fictitious* Images of Things.

RIDICULE,

RIDICULE, therefore, being of a vague, S E C T. IV.
unsteady Nature, merely relative to the
Imaginations and Passions of Mankind,
there must be several Orders or Degrees of
it, suited to the Fancies and Capacities of
those whom the Artist attempts to influence.
Among these several Kinds of Ridicule,
Justness of Thought and Expression, adorn-
ed with striking Figures, is the *highest*:
Coarse Language, Buffoonry, false and inde-
cent Images, are the Characters of the *low-
est*. For as the Imagination and Passions
are then most refined and just, when they
bear to the same Point with Reason; so,
that Species of Ridicule is most genuine
which tends to conduct them thither.

BUT, however Ridicule may *impress*
the Idea of apparent Turpitude or False-
hood on the Imagination; yet still Reason
remains the superior and corrective Power.
Therefore, every Representation of Ridi-
cule, which only applies to the Fancy and
Affections, must *finally* be *examined* and *de-
cided* upon, must be *tried*, *rejected*, or *re-
ceived*, as the *reasoning Faculty* shall deter-
mine.

AND thus *Ridicule* can never be a *De-
tector of Falshood*, or a *Test of Truth*.

SECTION

SECTION V.

SECT. IN further Confirmation of these Truths,
V. the direct Proofs of which may possibly lie somewhat remote from common Apprehension, let us appeal to Experience; to the general Sense and Practice of Mankind. And here we shall find, that Contempt and Ridicule are always founded on *preconceived Opinion*, whatever be the Foundation of it, whether *Reason* or *Imagination*, *Truth* or *Falsehood*.

FOR in fact, do not we see every different Party and Association of Men despising and deriding each other according to their various Manner of Thought, Speech, and Action? Does not the Courtier deride the Fox-hunter, and the Fox-hunter the Courtier? What is more ridiculous to a Beau, than a Philosopher: to a Philosopher, than a Beau? Drunkards are the Jest of sober Men, and sober Men of Drunkards. Physicians, Lawyers, Soldiers, Priests, and Free-thinkers, are the standing Subjects of Ridicule, to one another. Wisdom and Folly, the Virtuous and the Vile, the Learned and Ignorant, the Temperate and Debauched,
all

all give and return the Jest. According to ^{SECT.}
the various Impressions of Fancy and Af- V.
fection, the Aspects of Things are varied;
and consequently the same Objects seen un-
der these different Lights and Attitudes,
must in one Mind produce *Approbation*, in
another *Contempt*.

IF we examine the Conduct of *political*
Bodies or *religious* Sects, we shall find it of a
similar Nature. Each of these *railly* every
other, according to the Prejudices they have
imbibed in Favour of their own System.
How contemptible and ridiculous are the
European Forms of Government, in the
Eyes of an *Asiatic*^p? And do not we on
this Side the *Hellepont* repay them in their
own Kind? Are we a whit more united
among ourselves in our Ideas of the *Ridi-*
culous, when applied to Modes of Empire?
What is more contemptible to an *English-*
man, than that slavish Submission to arbi-
trary Will and lawless Power, which pre-
vails almost universally on the Continent?
And they are little acquainted with the State

^p A *Venetian* was introduced to the King of *Pegu* :
When this Prince was informed by him, that the *Vene-*
tians had *no King*, he *laughed* so excessively, that he lost
his Breath, and could not speak for a good while.
Recueil des Voyages, &c.

SECT.
V.

of Affairs *abroad*, who know not that, within the Precincts of Tyranny, *English Freedom* is one of the commonest Topics of Raillery and Ridicule: Every Man's judging for himself, is the Subject of the *Frenchman's* Drollery: One Man's judging *for all*, is the Subject of ours: The Case is parallel with regard to religious Tenets, where People are at Liberty to speak their Thoughts. Is there any Species of Invective which the Church of *Rome* hath not exercised upon all who have dissented from its Measures? And have not the Divines of the *reformed Churches* been as arrant *Droles*, in Vindication of their respective Systems? What Ribaldry and coarse Banter hath been thrown (nay rather, what hath *not* been thrown) by the *Freethinkers*, on Religion and *Christianity*? And how basely have some of our Divines prostituted their Pens in former Days, by descending to the same dirty Level? Even the Soureness of Puritanism, nay, the Sullenness of *Quakerism* have sometimes relaxed, and yielded themselves up to the Love of *Joking*: And sly Hints, in demure Phrase and sober Countenance, have as plainly spoken their Contempt of those they pitied, as the loud Laughter and Grimace

Essay on RIDICULE.

51

of worldly Men, the Disdain of those they ^{SECT.}
profess to hate. _{V.}

BUT what need we wonder that a Difference of Opinion in such weighty Affairs as those of Government and Religion should inspire a mutual Contempt, when we see that any considerable Variation of Manners in the most ordinary Circumstances of Life has the same Effect? The Customs of ancient Times have been held so ridiculous by many Moderns, that honest HOMER hath been branded as a Dunce, only because he hath recorded them. What Raillery hath been thrown on the venerable Bard, as well as the Hero he describes, only because he hath told us, that PATROCLUS acted in the Capacity of *Cook* for himself, and his Friend *Achilles*¹: That the Princess *Nausicaa*, followed by all her Maids, went down to wash the King's and Queen's Cloaths along with her own²? *Rebecca* and her *Historian*³ have fallen under the same ignorant Censure, because she went down to draw *Water*: And so have the Daughters of AUGUSTUS, for spinning their Father's Cloaths,

¹ *Il.*

² *Odyss.*

³ *Genesis.*

SECT.
V.

when he was Master of the World. Thus the undebauched Simplicity of ancient Times, becomes the Jest of modern Luxury and Folly. From the same Principle, any new Mode of Speech or Action, seen in our own Times, appears ridiculous to those who give Way to the Sallies of *uninformed* Contempt and Laughter. What superior Airs of Mirth and Gayety may be seen in a Club of Citizens, passing Judgment on the *Scotch*, the *Western*, or any other *remote provincial Dialect*? while at *the other End of the Town*, the Stream of *Ridicule* runs as strong on the Manners and Dialect of the *Exchange*. The least unusual Circumstance of Habit, beyond what the Fashion prescribes, is by turns so sensibly ridiculous, that one half of the Expence of Dress seems to consist in accommodating it to the Dictates and Caprice of the current Opinion. Nay, it is a just Complaint of the greatest Tragic Poet of the Age, that this indulged Spirit of Ridicule is a fundamental Obstruction to the Improvement of the *French Theatre*. “ We dare not, says he, hazard any thing new upon the Stage, in the Presence of a People whose constant
“ Practice

Essay on RIDICULE.

53

“Practice is, *to ridicule every thing that is* S E C T.
V.
“*not fashionable*.”

NEITHER is the Taste of Mankind less capricious with regard to the Methods of Ridicule^v, than the Objects of it. How many *Sayings* and *Repartées* are recorded from Antiquity as the Quintessence of Raillery, which among *us* only raise a Laugh, because they are *insipid*? TULLY himself often attempts in vain to extort a Smile from his modern Reader. Even the *sales Plautini* have in great Measure lost their *Poignancy*. There is a certain *Mode* of Ridicule peculiar to every Age and Country. What a curious Contrast to each other are an *Italian* and a *Dutch* Buffoon? And I suppose the Raillery of a *French* and a *Russian* Drole are as different, as the nimble Pranks of a *Monkey*, from the rude Gambols of a *Bear*. Even the same Country hath numerous Subdivisions and *under*

^tNous craignons de hazarder sur la scene de spectacles nouveaux devant une nation accoutumée à tourner en ridicule tout ce qui n'est pas *d'Usage*. Voltaire, *Disc. sur la Trag.*

^vQuænam tandem in loquendo, aut in scribendo, quasi titillatione risum laceflunt? dictum unum, aut alterum: brevicula narratio: nonnihil repentinum, et fortuitum, et recens, et novitate sua primum. Vavassor, *De ludicra dictione.*

SECT.
V.

Species of Ridicule. What is high Humour at *Wapping*, is rejected as nauseous in the *City*: What is delicate Raillery in the *City*, grows *coarse* and *intolerable* as you approach *St. James's*: And many a well meant Joke, that passeth unheeded in all these various Districts, would set an innocent Country Village in an Uproar of Laughter.

THIS Subject might be much enlarged on: For the Modes and Objects of Ridicule are as indefinite as the imagined Combinations of Things. But from these Examples drawn from the Conduct of Particulars, it appears no less than from the general Nature and Faculties of Man, that Ridicule hath no other Source than Imagination, Passion, Prejudice, and preconceived Opinion: And therefore can never be *the Detector of Falsehood, or Test of Truth*.

SECTION VI.

SECT.
VI.

THE Cause might be safely rested here. Yet, to throw a still clearer Light on the Subject of our Enquiry, let us now examine what his Lordship hath advanced in Support of his new Method of Investigation.
And

And as the noble Writer hath not thought it expedient to descend often to the argumentative Way; we must make the most of what we find in him that looks like a Reason.

HE tells his Friend, that “ nothing is ridiculous except what is deformed; nor is any thing Proof against Raillery, except what is handsome and just:---one may defy the World to turn real Bravery and Generosity into Ridicule. A Man must be soundly ridiculous, who, with all the Wit imaginable, would go about to ridicule Wisdom, or laugh at Honesty or good Manners^w.”

HERE we have a Mixture of equivocal Language and pompous Declamation. If he means to assert, that “ nothing is ridiculous, except what is *apparently* deformed,” the Proposition is true, but foreign to the Purpose: Because, through the Error of Imagination, Things *apparently deformed* may be *really beautiful*. If he means to assert, that “ nothing can be made to appear ridiculous, but what is *really* deformed,” I should be glad to know where the noble Author had conversed: In the

^w Vol. i. p. 128, 129.

SECT. VI. *Platonic Republic*, it may be so : But, in our *Gothic Systems*, Matters go quite otherwise : So far as common Observation reaches, it is easiest of all Things to make that *appear* ridiculous, which is not *really* deformed : And how should it be otherwise, while the human Imagination is liable to be imposed on, and capable of receiving *fictitious* for *real* Representations ?

THE noble Author tells us next, that “ nothing is Proof against Raillery, except “ what is handsome and just.” ---No indeed, nor *that* neither, at all Times. Though it be true, that nothing of the opposite Kind is proof against Raillery ; yet sure it is a strange Mistake to imagine, that what is really handsome and just is always Proof against it. For, by fictitious Images impressed on the Fancy, what is *really* handsome and just, is often rendered *apparently* false and deformed ; and thus becomes *actually* contemptible and ridiculous.

BUT “ one may defy the World to turn “ real Bravery and Generosity into Ridic- “ cule.” True, my Lord ; while they retain their *native Appearance*, and Beauty of Proportion. But alas, how easy is it to *disguise* them ! It is but concealing, varying,
or

or adding a Circumstance that may strike^{S E C T. VI.} the Fancy, and they at once assume new Shapes, new Names, and Natures. Thus the *Virtues* which, seen in a direct Light, attract our Admiration by their *Beauty*; when beheld through the oblique Mediums of Ridicule start up in the Forms of *Ideots*, *Hags*, and *Monsters*.

BUT the noble Writer enforces these general Appeals to Fact, by one extraordinary Instance. He tells us, "The divinest Man
" who had ever appeared in the Heathen
" World, was in the Height of witty Times,
" and by the wittiest of all Poets, most
" abominably ridiculed, in a whole Comedy writ and acted on Purpose: But
" so far was this from sinking his Reputation, or suppressing his Philosophy, that
" they each increased the more for it^x." It must be owned, this is an extraordinary Assertion, unless he means to affirm, that the Reputation and Philosophy of SOCRATES arose from his Blood, as "the *Christian* Sect
" sprung from the Blood of Martyrs^y." For it appears from all the Records of Antiquity, that the Wit of ARISTOPHANES was the most formidable Enemy that ever attacked

^x Vol. i. p. 31.

^y Vol. i.

SECT.
VI.

the divine Philosopher: This whetted the Rage of a *misled* Multitude, and dragged to Death that Virtue which hath ever since been the Admiration of Mankind. In this Opinion, we have the Concurrence of the first Writer of the present Age^z: And the Confession of another, who, although of a Turn conceited and fantastical enough, is yet of unquestioned Credit for his Ingenuity and Learning. This Writer, speaking of the wild Wit of an ARISTOPHANES, tells us, that “the Comedy inscribed *The Clouds*, is an execrable Attempt to expose one of the wisest and best of Men to the Fury and Contempt of a *lewd Multitude*, in which it had but *too much Success*^a.”

’TIS true, PALMERIUS, a learned *French* Critic of the last Age, had, from the Number of Years between the acting *The Clouds* of ARISTOPHANES, and the Death of SOCRATES, pretended that ÆLIAN was mistaken in assigning this Play as one of the principal Causes of his Destruction. P. BRUMOY, who hath wrote so excellently of the *Greek Theatre*, after having examined

^z Ded. to the *Div. Leg. of Moses*, p. 20.
on Mythology, p. 262.

^a *Letters*

the Affair with the utmost Candour, con-^{SECT.}
cludes thus: " His Account (ÆLIAN'S) VI.

" seems only defective, in that he hath not
" remarked the long Interval that passed be-
" tween the Representation of *The Clouds*,
" and the Condemnation of SOCRATES.
" But although the Comedy did not give
" the finishing Stroke to SOCRATES; yet it
" might have indisposed the Minds of the
" People, since these *comic Accusations* be-
" came *very serious ones*, which at length
" destroyed the wisest of the *Greeks*^b."

But since the noble Author seems to have adopted the other Opinion, and, as I am told, some shallow Mimics of modern Platonism have lately stolen PALMERIUS'S Criticism, and revived this stale Pretence, of the Number of Years between the Representation of *The Clouds*, and the Death of SOCRATES; it may be necessary to transcribe the following Passage from PLATO'S *Apology*, which puts the Matter beyond all Doubt: " But it

^b Son recit ne semble defectueux que pour n'avoir pas marqué le long intervalle qui se passa entre la representation des Nuees, et la condamnation de Socrate. Concluons que, bien que sa comedie n'ait pas porté le dernier coup à Socrate, elle a pu indisposer les esprits, puisque les accusations comiques devinrent des accusations tres serieuses, qui perdirent enfin le plus sage des Grecs. Tom. v. p. 360.

S E C T.

VI.

“ is just, O *Athenians*, that I should first
 “ reply to the false Charge of my FIRST
 “ ACCUSERS. Because several laid their
 “ groundless Accusations against me, MANY
 “ YEARS AGO: *whom* I DREAD MORE *than*
 “ *the Adherents of* ANYTUS; though these
 “ too be very powerful in Persuasion: But
 “ those are still *more powerful*, who have pos-
 “ sessed and sway’d you FROM YOUR VERY IN-
 “ FANCY, in laying false Accusations against
 “ me. Many, indeed, have been these my
 “ Accusers, and LONG HAVE THEY CON-
 “ TINUED thus to accuse me, and *persuaded*
 “ and *misled* you at that EARLY AGE, when
 “ you were MOST EASY OF BELIEF: While
 “ I, in the mean Time, was without one
 “ Defender. And what is worst of all, I
 “ know not so much as their very Names,
 “ *except only that of* THE COMEDIAN.---
 “ What then do my Accusers say?---So-
 “ CRATES is criminal, in that he enquires
 “ too curiously concerning what is under
 “ the Earth, and in the Heavens, and in
 “ that he can make the worse appear the
 “ better Reason; and that he teaches these
 “ Things to others. Such then is the Ac-
 “ cusation: *For such Things you saw in*
 “ ARI-

“ ARISTOPHANES’S COMEDY, where a ^{SECT.}
 “ fictitious SOCRATES *is carried about*, af- VI.
 “ firming, that he takes Journeys through
 “ the Air, and talking much more idle Stuff
 “ of the same Nature.”

HERE we see, the Philosopher refers their Accusation to its *original Cause*: And this he positively affirms, was no other than the *old Impressions* made against him on the

Ἐπεὶ πρῶτον μὲν οὖν δίκαιος εἰμι ἀπολοῖσθαι, ὡς ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πρὸς τὰ πρῶτα μὲν ψευδῆ κατήγορημένα, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς πρῶτους κατήγορους·—ἐμοῦ γὰρ πολλοὶ κατήγοροι γέγονασιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ παλαιὰ πολλὰ ἤδη ἔτη, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς λεγόντες· οὐς ἐγὼ μᾶλλον φοβούμαι ἢ τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ἀνύτην, καί περ ὄντας καὶ τοὺς δεινούς· ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνοι δεινότεροι, ὡς ἄνδρες, οἱ ὑμῶν τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐκ παιδῶν παρελαμβανόντες, ἐπειθὲν τε καὶ κατηγοροῦν ἐμοῦ οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς· ἐπεὶ αἱ εἰσὶν οὗτοι οἱ κατήγοροι πολλοὶ, καὶ πολλὴν ἤδη χρόνον κατήγορηκόες· εἰ δὲ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ λείοντες πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἐν ἡ αὐτῇ μαλίστα ἐπιστευσάτε, παῖδες οἷον εἰσὶν ὑμῶν καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀέχωντες, ἐρημὴν κατήγοροντες, ἀπολοῦμεν οὐδέν· ὁ δὲ πάντων ἀλογώτατος, ὅς τις οὐδὲ τὰ ὀνόματα οἷον τε αὐτῶν εἶδεναι καὶ εἰπέν· πλὴν εἰς κωμωδοποιὸς τυγχάνει ὢν.—τί δὲ λέγοντες διεβαλόντες οἱ διαβαλόντες;—Σωκράτης ἀδικεῖ, καὶ περιεργάζεται ζητῶν τὰ τε ὑπὸ γῆν καὶ τὰ ἐπουράνια· καὶ τὸν ἡττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν· καὶ ἄλλοις ταῦτα διδάσκων· ποταμὸς τις ἐστὶ· ποταμὸς γὰρ ἐώρατε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῇ Ἀριστοφάνους κωμῳδίᾳ, Σωκράτην τινὰ ἐκεῖ περὶ φερόμενον, φασκόντα τε αἰεροβάτην, καὶ ἄλλην πολλὴν φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα. Plat. Apol. Soc.

Minds

SECT. Minds of the *Athenians*, by the Comedy of
 VI. THE CLOUDS^d.

So much for the Silencing, which is the only Conviction, of Obstinacy and Ignorance. But in Reality, it is a Matter of small Consequence, in the present Question, Whether the Ridicule of the comic Poet was in Fact destructive to the divine Philosopher or not. As it demonstrably was, it is therefore a Case in Point. However, suppose it was not; what is the Consequence? Why, only this: That dishonest

^d As so much stir has been made about the Case of *Socrates* with regard to Ridicule, it may not be amiss to shew what *his* Opinion of it was in general, when considered as a *Test of Truth*. In the fifth Book of *Plato's Republic*, *Socrates* proposes that Women should engage in all the public Affairs of Life, along with Men. This, to *Glauco*, appears *ridiculous* in some of its Circumstances. *Socrates* replies, "That may be: But let us go to the Merits of the Question, setting aside all Raillery, advising the Railleurs to be serious, and putting them in Mind, that the very Practice now approved in Greece (of Men appearing naked) was, not long ago, treated there with the highest Ridicule: as it is to this Day among many Barbarians." — πορευτεον προς το τραχυ του νομου, δεηθεις τε τουτων, μη τα αυτων περιτειν, αλλα σπουδαζειν, και υπομνησασιν οτι ου πολυς χρονος εξ ου τοις Ελλησιν εδοκει αισχρα ειναι και γελοια απερ νυν τοις πολλοις των βαρβαρων, γυμνους ανδρας ορεσθαι. The following Part of this Passage I would recommend to the modern Patronizers of the *Way of Ridicule*.

Ridicule

Ridicule failed of its desired Success, *in one* ^{SECT.}
Instance. And how does this affect the VI.
 Question, so long as Ten thousand other
 Instances may be alledged to the contrary,
 which no Man, that is not void of common
 Sense or common Honesty, can possibly
 deny ?

FROM the Appeals to Fact, already
 made^e, may be drawn innumerable Instances
 of this Nature. There we see Truth, Wis-
 dom, Virtue, Liberty, successfully disguised
 and derided ; by this very means the Cause
 of Falsehood, Folly, Vice, Tyranny, main-
 tained : If to these it were necessary to add
 more ; we cannot perhaps in History find a
 more flagrant Proof of the Power of Ridi-
 cule against *Virtue herself*, than in that Heap
 of *execrable Comedies*, which have been the
 Bane and Reproach of this Kingdom thro'
 a Series of ninety Years. During this Pe-
 riod, the Generality of our comic Poets have
 been the unwearied *Ministers of Vice* : And
 have done her Work with so thorough an
 Industry, that it would be hard to find one
 Virtue, which they have not *sacrificed* at her
 Shrine. As Effects once established are not
 easily removed, so not only this, but the

^e See above § 5.

succeed-

SECT.
VI.

the succeeding Generation will probably retain the Impressions made in the two preceding ones ; when Innocence was the Sport of abandoned Villany ; and the *successful Adulterer decked out* with all the *Poet's Art*, at the Expence of the *ridiculed and injured Husband* : When moral Virtue and Religion were made the Jest of the *licentious* ; and female *Modesty* was banished, to make Way for shameless *Effrontery* :

The Fair sat panting at a *Courtier's Play*,
And not a Mask went unimprov'd away :
The *modest Fan* was lifted up no more,
And Virgins *smil'd* at what they *blush'd* before^f.

SECTION VII.

SECT.
VII.

HERE then we have accumulated Proofs of the fatal Influences of Ridicule, when let loose from the Restraints of Reason.

YET still his Lordship insists, that
“ Truth, 'tis supposed, may bear all Lights^g.”
To which it is replied, that “ Truth will
“ indeed bear every Light, *but a false one*.”
He adds, that “ one of those principal
“ Lights or natural Mediums by which

^f Essay on Criticism.^g Vol. i. p. 61.

“ Things

“ Things are to be viewed, in order to a ^{SECT.}
“ thorow Recognition, is Ridicule itself^h.” ^{VII.}

This is full as wise a Method to manifest the Rectitude and Truth of Things, as it would be to shew the Rectitude of a ruling Staff, by immersing one part of it in clear Water. The Staff indeed would still continue strait, but the two *Mediums*, in which it lies, though both *natural* ones, would concur to make it appear crooked. Just so might it fare with Truth, when half shewn by the *Medium of Reason*, and the other half, by the *Medium of Ridicule*.

BUT the noble Writer asks us, “ How
“ can any one of the least Justness of
“ Thought endure a Ridicule wrong
“ placedⁱ ?”--- I answer, by being *mised* or
mistaken; and then Men are ready to *bear*
any thing. Shew me him whose Imagi-
nation never received or retained a false Im-
pression, and I shall readily allow he can
never *endure a Ridicule wrong placed*. But
of this *infallible* Race I know none, except
the Inhabitants of *Utopia*. 'Tis true, he
candidly acknowledges, that “ the *Vulgar*
“ may swallow any *sordid Jest*, any *mere*
“ *Drollery and Buffoonry*^k.” Indeed! How

^h Vol. i. p. 61.

ⁱ Ibid. p. 11.

^k Ibid.

SECT. VII. then can he *defy the World to turn real Bravery or Generosity into Ridicule, or laugh successfully at Honesty or Good-manners?* And where was the Wonder or Improbability, that the Wit of ARISTOPHANES should incite a *lewd Multitude* to destroy the *divine Philosopher*¹?

BUT then he tells us, “it must be a “finer and truer Wit that takes with the “Men of *Sense* and *Breeding*”^m.” This Sentence it must be owned is artful enough: Because it obliges one to make a Separation that may look like *ill-natured*, before one can expose its Weakness. A truer Wit indeed may be necessary to take with the *Men of Sense*; but these, I apprehend, may sometimes be distinguished from the *Men of Breeding*: For it is certain, that in most Countries the Vulgar are a much more *considerable* Body, than is generally imagined. Yet, although neither *Reason* nor the *Passions* gain any Advantages from *high Life*,

¹L'Impudence qu'il avoit de tourner en ridicule la religion, devoit être reprimée: car une refutation sérieuse ne fait pas à beaucoup près tant de mal, que les railleries d'un homme d'esprit. Les *jeunes gens* se laissent gater par ces fortes de moqueurs plus que l'on ne sauroit dire. Bayle, art. BION.

^m Vol. i. p. 11.

it must be owned, the Imagination acquires a certain *Delicacy*, which the *low Vulgar* are generally Strangers to. The coarse Pranks of a *merry Andrew* that engages the Attention of a *Country Fair*, would make but a poor Figure at *St. James's*. But still it is only in the *Modes*, not the Objects of Ridicule, with regard to which the *Courtier* differs from the *Clown*. The *Peasant* and his *Lord* are equally susceptible of false Impressions; equally liable to have Falsehood obtruded on them for Truth, Folly for Wisdom, Vice for Virtue: The Methods only of Ridicule, the Engines of Deceit must vary; must be accommodated to the different Views of Things and Circumstances of Life, among which they have respectively been conversant. Thus it must indeed be a *finer*, but by no means a *truer* Kind of Wit, that takes with the *Men of Breeding*.

THE noble Writer proceeds to ask,
“ What Rule or Measure is there in the
“ World, except in the considering the real
“ Temper of Things, to find which are
“ truly serious, and which ridiculous? And
“ how can this be done, unless by applying

SECT. VII. "the Ridicule, to see whether it will
 "bearⁿ?---Yes sure, there is another Rule:
 The Rule of Reason: Which alone can
 distinguish Appearances from Realities, and
 fix the true Nature of Things: From whose
 Determinations alone, we ever can distin-
 guish true from pretended Gravity, just
 from groundless Raillery. But the Way of
 Investigation here proposed by his Lordship,
 inverts the very Order and Constitution of
 Things: By this means Appearances take
 the Place of Realities; Imagination usurps
 the Sovereignty which belongs to Reason;
 and RIDICULE IS MADE THE TEST OF
 WHAT IS RATIONAL, INSTEAD OF REA-
 SON BEING MADE THE TEST OF WHAT IS
 RIDICULOUS.

YET still the noble Author suspects ill
 Consequences: That Subjects " may be very
 " grave and weighty *in our Imagination*, but
 " very ridiculous and impertinent in their
 " own Nature^o." True: and on the other
 hand, Things may appear ridiculous and
 impertinent *in our Imagination*, which are
 very grave and weighty in their own Na-
 ture. What then is the Consequence in
 either Case? Why, only this: That *Ima-*

ⁿ Vol. i. p. 12. ^o Ibid. p. 11.

gination,

gination, and therefore *Ridicule* which de- S E C T.
VII.
pends upon it, can never be a *Test* of Truth.

BUT his Lordship insists, that “ Gravity
“ is of the very *Essence* of *Imposture* ^p.”
Yet this will do little for his Purpose, un-
less he can prove too, that “ *Imposture* is
“ of the *Essence* of Gravity.” And if so,
what will become of the *Enquiry concerning*
Virtue? Gravity, it is true, is commonly an
Attendant of *Imposture*: And so is Laugh-
ter, generally speaking, of Folly. With as
much Reason therefore as the noble Writer
infers from hence, that Gravity is *Imposture*,
we may infer that Laughter is Folly in Dis-
guise. In Truth, the Inference is ground-
less, in both Cases. Though every Knave
should affect Gravity, yet every grave Man
is not a Knave: Though every Fool will be
Laughing, yet every Man that laughs is not
a Fool: We may be serious and honest, as
well as merry and wise. Mirth and Gra-
vity are both harmless Things, provided
they be properly applied: And we have
seen that it is the Province of Reason alone,
to determine when they are so.

BUT after all, the Proposition, that *Gra-
vity is of the Essence of Imposture*, is false:

^p Vol. i. p. 11.

F 3

It

S E C T.
VII.

It is only an occasional, though, indeed, a pretty close Attendant, in Consequence of a Maxim long ago taken for granted, that *Reason was the Test of Truth*. Let once his Lordship's be generally embraced, that *Ridicule is the Test of Truth*, and we should soon see *Buffoonry* as close an Attendant on *Imposture*, as now *Gravity*. The Tryal has been made; and successfully enough too, by him who has kept the Multitude in Opinion for twenty Years, that Learning and Religion are better taught in his Conventicle, than in all the Universities and Churches of *Christendom* put together. And sure if any thing be the *Essence* of his *Imposture*, it is *Buffoonry*.

AND here let us not forget to observe, that the noble Writer often (as in the Passage last cited) confounds *Mirth*, *Urbanity*, or *Good-humour*, with *Raillery* or *Ridicule*: Than which, no two Things in Nature are more diametrically opposite. The first, as it ariseth solely from *sudden* and *pleasing Resemblances* impressed on the Imagination, is justly regarded by all, as the best *Mediator* in every Debate. The last, as it ariseth solely from *Contempt*, is therefore no less justly regarded by most, as an *Embroider* and

Incendiary. He sets out with a formal Profession of proving the Efficacy of Humour and Ridicule in the Investigation of Truth: Yet, by shifting and mixing his Terms, he generally slides insensibly into mere Encomiums on *Good-breeding, Chearfulness, Urbanity, and free Enquiry*; and then, from these Premises, often draws Consequences in Favour of *Ridicule*, as if it were an *equivalent Term*. This indeed keeps something like an Argument on Foot, and misleads the superficial Reader.

BUT the noble Author triumphs in another Observation: When speaking of *modern Zealots*, he tells us, that “whatever “they think grave and solemn, they suppose must never be treated out of a grave “and solemn Way. Though what another “thinks so, they can be contented to treat “otherwise: And are forward to try the “Edge of Ridicule against any Opinions besides their own^a.” Now, if this be so; how is *Gravity of the Essence of Imposture*, as he had before affirmed? But whatever becomes of that Proposition, the Remark is just. And whomsoever he means to Compliment with the Name of *Zealots*, whe-

^a Vol. i. p. 60.

S E C T.
VII.

ther in Religion or Freethinking, I shall not compliment as Exceptions to the Truth of it. There is scarce a Topic of Religion, either for its Dishonour or Support, that hath not been exposed to the illiberal Jokes of some Bungler in Controversy. And a much coarser Advocate in the Cause of Ridicule^r, hath wrote an elaborate and most tedious Dissertation, to prove that the Way of Raillery hath been successfully applied by every Sect of Religionists and Infidels, to the Destruction of each other's Tenets, and the Establishment of their own. How he gains his Conclusion, that an Engine which tends to fix Mankind in their preconceived Opinions, and establish so many Species of Error, is of Importance and Efficacy in the Search of Truth, may not be so easy to determine. In the mean time, in Reply to his whole Treatise, as well as to the last mentioned Remark of our noble Author, it may be sufficient to observe, that Mankind often retain their own, and oppose other's Opinions, from an imperfect View of the Nature of Things: Their peculiar Tenets in Religion, as in other Subjects, are often founded in Imagination only: Their Ob-

^r Supposed to be Mr. Collins.

jections to those of others are often as groundless and fanciful. How natural then is it for them to communicate their Opinions on that Foundation on which they received them? How natural, that they should throw the Colours of their own Imagination on the Tenets they oppose? That they should obtrude the like fictitious Images on others, which themselves have embraced as Truth? That they should hold forth Appearances for Realities; employ Eloquence instead of Logic; and endeavour to *persuade* whom they should, but cannot, *convince*?

It seems therefore that his Lordship's Observation (which contains the Quintessence of his Associate's Work, and which probably was the *Leaven* that *leavened* the whole *Lump* of Malice and Dulness) instead of being favourable to Ridicule as a Test of Truth, can only tend to disgrace it. For since every religious and unbelieving Sect hath *alike successfully* employed it in supporting their respective Tenets, and in rendering those of their Adversaries contemptible; it follows, inasmuch as Doctrines which are essentially repugnant cannot all be true, that

RIDICULE IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL

S E C T. VII. FUL ENGINES, BY WHICH ERROR CAN BE
MAINTAINED AND ESTABLISHED.

S E C T I O N VIII.

S E C T. VIII. WE shall only mention one more of the
noble Writer's Arguments in Favour of his
new *Test*: But it is, indeed, the very *Key-
Stone* of this visionary Arch, which he hath
with such fantastic Labour thrown over the
Depths of Error, in order to invite Mankind
over it as a short and secure Passage to the
Abode of Truth and Wisdom.

HE tells us, that a new Species of En-
thusiasts (*French Prophets*) having lately
risen up among us, " We have delivered
" them over to the cruellest Contempt in
" in the World. I am told for certain, that
" they are at this very Time the Subject
" of a choice Droll or Puppet-show at
" Bart'lmy-Fair. — And while Bart'lmy-
" Fair is in Possession of this Privilege, I
" dare stand Security to our national Church,
" that no Sect of Enthusiasts, no new Ven-
" ders of Prophecy or Miracles, shall ever
" get the Start, or put her to the Trouble
" of trying her Strength with them, in any
" Case^s."

¹ Vol. i. p. 27, 28.

So

So far, for Peace sake, we venture to agree with the noble Writer: But now comes a finishing Stroke indeed. SECT.
VIII.

FOR he proceeds to congratulate the present Age, that in the Beginnings of the Reformation, when Popery had got Possession, *Smithfield* was used in a more *tragical Way*. And that “had not the Priests, as is usual, “preferred the Love of Blood to all other “Passions, they might in a *merrier Way*, “perhaps, have *evaded the greatest Force of* “*our reforming Spirit*.”

AND NOW, for Form's sake, let us suppose the noble Author to be what he assumes, a Friend to Religion and Reformation: Under this Character, he recommends *Ridicule* to us, as of sovereign Use to investigate Truth, try Honesty, and unmask formal Hypocrisy and Error. To prove this Use, he tell us, what we should least have expected, that if, instead of the tragical Way of *Smithfield*, the *Romish* Priests had preferred the comic Drollery of Bart'lmey-Fair, they had perhaps gained their Point, and *evaded the greatest Force of our reforming Spirit*. Here the noble Writer forgets his Part, which is that of a *Believer* and a *Pro-*

SECT.
VIII.

testant; alledging an Instance, which none but a staunch *Papist* could *consistently* apply : And, in his Scarcity of Proofs for the Use of Ridicule in the *Establishment* of *Truth*, he hath offered at one which, if a Fact, would sufficiently have evinced the Power of Ridicule in its *Destruction*. Here then lies the Dilemma : Let his Followers get him off as they can. If their Master be a Believer, he has reasoned ill ; if a Freethinker, he has managed worse. Had he been a little more knowing in the Times he speaks of, he might have found an Instance more pertinent to his Argument, and more conformable to his Character ; an Instance which shews, not what *Ridicule* might be supposed capable of doing, but what it actually effected. And this not to stop *Reformation*, but to discredit *Popery*. Bishop BURNET tells us, that in the Year 1542, “ Plays and Interludes were a great Abuse : “ In them, Mock-Representations were “ made, both of the Clergy and of the Pa- “ geantry of their Worship. The Clergy “ complained much of these as an Intro- “ duction to Atheism, when Things sacred “ were thus laughed at : And said, they that “ begun to laugh at Abuses, would not cease till

“ till they had *represented* all the Mysteries S E C T.
VIII.
 “ of Religion as *ridiculous*: The graver
 “ Sort of Reformers did not approve of it:
 “ But political Men encouraged it; and
 “ thought nothing could more *effectually*
 “ *pull down* the Abuses that yet remained,
 “ than the exposing them to the *Scorn* of
 “ of the Nation.”

THIS curious Piece of History is remarkable; and tends no less to support our general Argument, than to recommend, what the noble Writer is pleased to sneer at, the Sobriety of our *reforming Spirit*. Political Men, says the Historian, whose Business, and therefore whose Aim, was to *persuade*, encouraged the Way of Ridicule: But the *graver Sort of Reformers*, whose nobler Ministry, and consequently whose Purpose, was to *convince*, did not *approve* of it.

BUT his Lordship is so fond of his Reflection, that he pushes it still further. “ I
 “ never heard (says he) that the ancient
 “ Heathens were so well advised in their *ill*
 “ *Purpose* of suppressing the *Christian* Re-
 “ ligion in its first Rise, as to make use of
 “ any 'Time of this Bart'lmy-Fair Method.

“ *History of the Reformation*, A. D. 1542.

“ But

SECT. " But this I am persuaded of, that, had *the*
 VIII. *Truth of the Gospel* been any way *sur-*

mountable, they would have bid much
 " fairer for the silencing it, if they had
 " chosen to bring our primitive Founders
 " upon the Stage in a pleasanter Way, than
 " that of Bear-Skins and Pitch-Barrels^w."

Was ever an Argument so unfortunately applied?---What?---Could nothing *surmount* and *destroy* the *Truth* of the Gospel, except only *Ridicule*, the very *Test* of *Truth*?---And as to the *Jews*, he says, that " with all
 " their Malice and Inveteracy to our Savi-
 " our and his Apostles after him, had they
 " but taken the Fancy to act such Puppet-
 " Shows in his *Contempt*, as at this Hour
 " the Papists are acting in his Honour; I
 " am apt to think they might possibly have
 " done our Religion more harm, than by
 " all their other Ways of Severity^x."

WHAT a Favourite is that *facetious Droll* of *Wood and Wire*, the *Bart'lmey-Fair Hero*, with these modern Advocates for Mirth and Raillery! And indeed, not without Cause, for of him they seem to have learnt their very wittiest Practices. *Who* taught them to turn their Backs upon their Betters? to

^w Vol. i. p. 29.

^x Ibid.

disturb the most serious Scenes with an *unsavoury* Joke ; to be at once blind and bold, and make a Jest of the Devil ? Indeed they have so well taken off his Manners, that one Description will serve them both. And whether you suppose the fine one which follows to be meant of the *Original*, or one of the *Copies*, you are equally sure you have a good Likeness.

Sed præter reliquos incedit *Homuncio, rauca*
Voce strepens ;—*Pygmæum* territat agmen
Major, et immanem *miratur turba gigantem*.
Hic magna fretus mole, imparibusque lacertis
Confusus, gracili *jaëtat convitia vulgo*,
Et crebro solvit (*lepidum caput !*) ora *cæchinno*.
Quanquam res agitur solenni *seria pompa*,
Spernit sollicitum intractabilis ille tumultum,
Et *risu* importunus adest, atque *omnia turbat* ^y.

BUT to return to our Argument. Be you well assured of this, kind Reader, that whatever Impressions are made upon a Populace in the Way of *Scenery* and *dramatic* Representation, are no more than so many Kinds of *silent Eloquence* and *Persuasion* : That Facts which ought to be proved, are always *taken for granted*, and Things and Persons often rendered *apparently* absurd, which *really* are not so. That *the Vulgar*

[†] *Musæ Angl.* MACH. GEST. by Mr. Addison.

(both

S E C T. (both *high* and *low*) *are apt to swallow any*
VIII. *sordid Jest or Buffoonry, so it be but accom-*
 modated to their *preconceived Opinions*:
 That this Way of Ridicule, like every other,
 as it is fairly or dishonestly applied, will
 sweep away Truth or Falsehood without
 Distinction: That it will confound *French*
Prophets with *English Reformers*, and on
 the same false Foundation establish the
 Truths of Protestantism, or the Absurdities
 of Popery. That as *Virtue* herself cannot
 bear up against a Torrent of Ridicule, so
 neither can *Religion*: That therefore *Christi-*
anity had indeed more to fear from the
contemptuous Misrepresentations, than the
bitterest Rage of its Enemies: That *Christi-*
anity did in Fact endure this more than firey
 Trial: That its divine Founder was *de-*
rided^z as well as *crucified*: That they who
 in succeeding Times suffered for the Faith,
 endured *cruel Mockings* no less than *Scourg-*
ings, Bonds, and Imprisonment: That many
 a brave Martyr offered up his Prayers to
 Heaven, that he might be released by Death
 from the *Contempt* of his Enemies: And af-
 ter being *baited* in the *Bear-Skin*, found a
Refuge in the *Faggot*; or the *Pitch-Barrel*.

^z *Prophecy unto us, who it was that smote thee!*

SECTION IX.

HOWEVER, the noble Writer's Modesty must not be forgotten. For while he might have arrogated to himself the Glory of this wondrous Discovery, he hath informed us of an *ancient Sage*, whose Idea of Ridicule coincided with his own. " 'Twas the Saying of an ancient Sage, that Humour was the only Test of Gravity^a."

THE Reader will probably be surprized to find that the Passage here referred to by the noble Writer, is no other than what hath been already quoted from ARISTOTLE^b as a Direction to the Conduct of an Orator. 'Tis likewise remarkable, that his Lordship, in quoting the original Passage in his *Margin*, has, by the *prudent* Omission of an emphatical Expression, converted it from a particular Rule of Rhetoric into a general Maxim of Philosophy^c. But 'tis of all most remarkable, that in his pretended Translation, he hath entirely perverted the Sense of the Author, whose Authority he attempts to build upon.

^a Vol. i. p. 74.

^b See above, p. 43.

^c The Words, *των εναντιων* — *Adversariorum* — are omitted.

SECT.
IX.

“ As Ridicule (says the great Philosopher) seems to be of some Use in Pleading; it was the Opinion of GORGIAS, that you ought to confound your Adversary’s serious Argument by Raillery, and his Raillery by serious Argument.” This is almost a literal Translation of the Passage. But how the noble Author could so far impose upon himself or others, as to strip it of its native Dress, and disguise it under the fantastical Appearance of a Maxim, “ that Humour is the only Test of Gravity, and Gravity of Humour,” --- this is not so easy to account for.

HOWEVER this came to pass, ’tis certain, that the Observation, as it lies in ARISTOTLE, is a just and a fine one: as it lies in the noble Writer’s maimed Translation, it is *false*, if not *unmeaning*.

THAT an Orator should *confound his Adversary’s Raillery by serious Argument*, is rational and just. By this means he tears off the false Disguises of Eloquence, and distinguisheth real from apparent Truth. That he should *confound his Adversary’s serious Argument by Raillery*, is, if not a just, yet a legal Practice. The End of the Advocate or Orator is Persuasion only; to
Truth

Truth or Falsehood as it happens. If he SECT. IX.
 hath Truth on his Side, it is likely what he
 will have then to do, will be *to confound his*
Adversary's Raillery by serious Argument.
 If Truth be against him, he will be forced
 to change Weapons with his Adversary,
whose serious Argument he must try to con-
found by Raillery. This is all the Mystery
 there is in the Matter: By which it appears,
 that whenever in this case Ridicule is op-
 posed to Reasoning, it is so far from being
 the *Test* or Support, that it is the *Destruction*
 of *Truth.* And the judicious QUINTILIAN
 fairly confesses it, where he assigns the
 Cause why Ridicule is of such mighty
 Force in Oratory---“ Quia animum ab in-
 “ tentione rerum frequenter avertit”---Be-
 cause it draws off the Mind from attending to
 the real Nature of Things. Thus you see
 the Propriety and Beauty of the *Saying of*
our ancient Sage, when fairly represented.

BUT as the noble Writer hath translated
 the Passage, it is a Curiosity indeed. “ Hu-
 “ mour is the only Test of Gravity, and
 “ Gravity of Humour.” He applies it not
 to Eloquence, but Philosophy; not to Per-
 suasion, but Conviction. And so by the
 strangest Conversion in Nature, makes the

S E C T.
IX.

Trier, and the Thing tried, each in their turns, become Agent and Patient to one another. But what Artist ever attempted to *try* the Justness of his *Square* or *Level*, by the Work which he has formed by the Assistance of those Instruments? Or was ever the Gold which hath been put to the Test, reciprocally applied to *try* the Touch-stone? If therefore *Gravity*, or Reasoning, be the Test of *Humour*; *Humour* never can be the Test of *Gravity*: As on the other hand, if *Humour* be the Test of *Gravity*, then *Gravity* can never be the Test of *Humour*.

SINCE therefore this *see-saw* Kind of Proof returns into itself, and consequently ends in an Absurdity; 'tis plain, that one half of the noble Writer's Proposition must effectually destroy the other: Let us see then, which Moiety deserves to be supported. His own Comment on the Passage will help us to determine. Which, however, he seems desirous his Reader should receive as a Part of the *Saying of his ancient Sage*: But whoever will turn to the Passage, as it lies in ARISTOTLE, will find that GORGIAS is entirely innocent of the whole Affair.

“ GRAVITY,

“ GRAVITY, says his Lordship, is the
 “ Test of *Humour* : Because a Jest that will
 “ not bear a serious Examination, is cer-
 “ tainly false Wit.” True : here we have a
 rational Test established. Next he inverts
 the Proposition, sets it with its Head down-
 wards, like a Traytor’s Scutcheon, and
 now, says he, behold “ *Humour is the Test*
 “ of Gravity.” To prove this, Reason re-
 quires he should have added “ Because an
 “ Argument, which can be successfully ri-
 “ diculed, is certainly false Logic.” But
 this was too hardy a Proposition to be di-
 rectly advanced : He therefore contents
 himself with hinting, that “ a Subject which
 “ will not bear Raillery *is suspicious !*” Now
 we know that *Suspicion* is often ground-
 less : That what is suspected to be false,
 may yet be true. So that the noble Writer
 again suffers this new Test to slip through
 his Fingers, even while he is holding it up
 to your Admiration. But if any thing fur-
 ther be necessary to clear up this Point, it
 may be observed in short, that Gravity or
 Argument is the Test of *Humour*, because
 Reason marks the real Differences of
 Things : That *Humour* can never be the

SECT.
IX.

SECT. IX. Test of Gravity, because Imagination can
 only suggest their apparent Analogies.

THUS the Sentiment of GORGIAS is grossly mistaken or designedly misrepresented by the noble Writer: as it lies in ARISTOTLE, it is rational and consistent: as it is taken up by his Lordship, it is chimerical and groundless.

IT might have been difficult to assign a Reason, why the noble Writer should have attempted to establish this *two-fold* Method of Proof, had not he explained his Intention in another Place. He there^d wisely recommends the old *scholastic Manner* to the Clergy, as being most suitable to their Abilities and Character: The *Way of Ridicule* he appropriates to the Men of Taste and Breeding; declaring it ought to be kept sacred from the impure Touch of an Ecclesiastic. For as Clubs and Cudgels have long been appropriated to Porters and Footmen, while every Gentleman is ambitious to understand a *Sword*; so the clumsy Way of *Argumentation* is only fit for Priests and Pedants, but *pointed Wit* is the Weapon for the Man of Fashion: This decides a Quarrel *handsomely*. The *pretty Fellow* is at your

^d Vol. iii. Misc. v. c. 2. § 65, &c.

Vitals in a Moment; while the Pedant SECT. IX. keeps labouring at it for an Hour together.

BUT still higher is the noble Writer's Idea of Wit and Ridicule: While he applies it not only to *Conquest*, but *Investigation*: And we must own, it was an Attempt worthy of his Genius, to establish this new and *expeditious* Method of Search and Conviction. In which, by the sole Application of so cheap and *portable an Instrument* as that of *Raillery*, a Gentleman might obtain the certain Knowledge of the *true Proportion* of Things, without the tedious and vulgar Methods of *Mensuration*. In the mean Time, we, whom the noble Author hath so often condescended to distinguish by the honourable Title of Formalists and Pedants, finding ourselves incapable of this *sublime* Way of Proof, must be content to drudge on in the old and beaten Track of *Reasoning*. And after all, 'tis probable this new Attempt will succeed no better than the curious Conceit of the *learned Taylor* in *Laputa*: Who being employed in making a Suit for the facetious GULLIVER; disdained the *vulgar Measures* of his Profession, and took that Gentleman's *Altitude* by the Help of a *Quadrant*. This, it must

SECT. IX. be acknowledged, was a Theory no less sublime than our noble Author's: Yet it failed miserably when applied to Practice: For the sagacious Traveller informs us, that, notwithstanding the Acuteness and Penetration of the Artist, his Cloaths were *wretchedly ill made.*

SECTION X.

SECT. X. WE have now obviated every Thing material, that the noble Writer hath advanced in Support of his new System. But as one of his most zealous Followers hath undertaken *in Form* to explain and defend his Notions on this Subject^e, it may be proper to examine how far this Gentleman's Argument is consistent with Truth.

HE tells us, that “to ask whether Ridicule be a Test of Truth, is in other Words to ask, whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming, can be ridiculous.”

HERE, as the Foundation of all, we see the same Kind of Ambiguity lurking, as

* See a Note on the *Pleasures of Imagination*, a Poem. Book iii.

was observed in the noble Writer, in the Passage already remarked on^f. For if by "that" S E C T.
X.
"which is ridiculous," he means that which is *really* ridiculous, it is allowed this can never be morally true : But this is so far from proving Ridicule to be a Test of Truth, that it implies the contrary : It implies some further Power, which may be able to distinguish what is *really* ridiculous, from what is only *apparently* so. On the contrary, if by "that which is ridiculous," he means that which is *apparently* ridiculous, it may be affirmed, this may be morally true : Because Imagination and Passion often take up with Fictions instead of Realities, and can never of themselves distinguish them from each other. He tells us his Question "does not deserve a serious Answer." At least it wanted an Explanation.

THE Gentleman proceeds : "For it is most evident, that as in a metaphysical Proposition offered to the Understanding for its Assent, *the Faculty of Reason* examines the Terms of the Proposition, and finding one Idea which was supposed equal to another, to be in Fact unequal, of Consequence rejects the Proposition as

^f See above, p. 55.

" a False-

SECT. X. "a Falsehood: So in Objects offered to the
 " Mind for its Esteem or Applause, the
 " *Faculty of Ridicule* feeling an Incongruity
 " in the Claim, urges the Mind to reject
 " it with Laughter and Contempt."

HERE the *Faculty of Reason* is excluded from the Examination of moral Truths, and a *new Faculty*, never before heard of, the *Faculty of Ridicule*, is substituted in its Place. Now when a *Stranger* is introduced into good Company, and sure these can be no better than the *Public*, it is usual not only to tell his Name, but *what he is*, and what his *Character*: This the Gentleman hath not condescended to do: 'Tis true, in a preceding Page he tells us, that "the Sensation of Ridicule is not a bare Perception of the Agreement or Disagreement of Ideas; but a *Passion or Emotion of the Mind, consequential to that Perception.*" In another Place he expressly calls it "a gay Contempt." Now, if the *Faculty of Ridicule* be the same as the *Sensation of Ridicule*, or a *gay Contempt*, then by substituting the plain old Term of *Contempt*, instead of the *Faculty of Ridicule*, we shall clearly see what the above cited Passage contains. "As in a metaphysical Proposition, the *Faculty*

" *culty*

“ *Faculty of Reason* examines the Terms, and
 “ rejects the Falsehood; so in Objects of-
 “ fered to the Mind for its Esteem and Ap-
 “ plause, *the Passion of Contempt* feeling an
 “ Incongruity in the Claim, urges the Mind
 “ to reject it *with Laughter and CON-*
 “ TEMPT!”—Why was not honest *Reason*
 admitted of the Council, and set on the
Seat of Judgment, which of right belongs
 to her? The Affair would then have stood
 thus: “ As in a metaphysical Proposition,
 “ the Faculty of Reason examines the
 “ Terms, and rejects the Falsehood; so in
 “ Objects offered to the Mind for its Esteem
 “ or Applause, *the same Faculty of Reason*
 “ finding an Incongruity in the Claim, urges
 “ the Mind to reject it with *Contempt* and
 “ *Laughter.*” This would have been Sense
 and Argument; but then it had not been
Characteristical.

WE shall now clearly discover the Dis-
 tinction that is to be made on the following
 Passage: “ And thus a double Advantage is
 “ gained: For we both *detect* the moral
 “ Falsehood *sooner* than in the Way of spe-
 “ culative Enquiry, and impress the Minds
 “ of Men with a stronger Sense of the Va-
 “ nity

SECT. "nity and Error of its Authors^e."—Here
 X. 'tis evident, that the Design "of *detecting*
 "the moral Falseness *sooner* than in the
 "Way of speculative Enquiry" is an ab-
 surd Attempt: But that "to impress the
 "Minds of Men with a stronger Sense of
 "the Vanity and Error of its Authors,"
 when Reason hath made the proper Search,
 is both a practicable and a rational Inten-
 tion.

"BUT it is said, continues he, that the
 "Practice is dangerous, and may be incon-
 "sistent with the Regard we owe to Ob-
 "jects of real Dignity and Excellence^h."
 Yet this is but a secondary Objection: The
 principal one is, *that the Attempt is absurd*.
 However, the Circumstance of Danger is
 not without its Weight: Nor is the Gen-
 tleman's reply at all sufficient---"that the
 "Practice *fairly managed* can never be dan-
 "gerous." For though Men are not dis-
 honest in obtruding false Circumstances upon
 us, we may be so *weak* as to *obtrude* them
 upon ourselves. Nay, it can hardly be
 otherwise, if, instead of exerting our Rea-
 son to correct the Suggestions of Fancy and
 Passion, we give them an unlimited Range,

^e Ibid. p. 106.

^h Ibid. p. 106.

and acquiesce in their partial or groundless Representations, without calling in Reason to decide upon their Truth or Falsehood. By this means we shall often “view Objects of real Dignity and Excellence,” in such shapes and Colours as are foreign to their Nature; and then sit down and laugh most profoundly at the Phantoms of our own creating.

BUT still he insists, that though false Circumstances be imposed upon us, yet “the Sense of Ridicule always *judges right*,” or in more vulgar Terms, “The Passion of Contempt always judges right.” Whereas, in Truth, it never *judges* at all; being equally excited by Objects real or imaginary that present themselves.

OBSERVE therefore what a Number of *new* Phrases and *blind* Guides this of Ridicule, if once admitted, would bring in upon us, and all on equal Authority. For with the same Reason, as the Passion of Contempt is styled the *Sense of Ridicule*, the Passion of *Fear* may be called the *Sense of Danger*, and *Anger* the *Sense of Injury*. But who hath ever dreamt of exalting these Passions into so many Tests of the Reality of their respective Objects? The Design must have been re-
jected

SECT.
X.

jected as absurd, because it is the Province of Reason alone, to correct the blind Sal-
lies of every Passion, and fix it on its proper Object. Now, the Scheme of Ridicule is of the same Nature. It proposes the Passion of Contempt as the Test of moral Falsehood, which, from the very Terms, appears to be a Project full as wise, as to make Fear the Test of Danger, or Anger the Test of Injury.

THE Gentleman proceeds next to the Case of SOCRATES. He owns "the SOCRATES of ARISTOPHANES is as truly ridiculous a Character as ever was drawn : But it is not the Character of SOCRATES, the divine Moralist and Father of ancient Wisdom."---No indeed : and here lay the Wickedness of the Poet's Intention, and the Danger of his Art : in imposing Fictions for Realities on the misled Multitude ; and putting a Fool's Coat on the Father of ancient Wisdom. 'Tis true, the People laughed at the *ridiculous Sophist* ; but when the *ridiculous Sophist* was doomed to drink the Poison, what think you became of the *Father of ancient Wisdom* ?

BUT then he tells us, that as the comic Poet introduced foreign Circumstances into the

the Character of SOCRATES, and built his ^{SECT.}
Ridicule upon these; “ So has the Reason-
“ ing of SPINOZA made many Atheists;
“ he has founded it indeed on Suppositions
“ utterly false, but allow him these, and his
“ Conclusions are unavoidably true. And
“ if we must reject the Use of Ridicule,
“ because, by the Imposition of false Cir-
“ cumstances, things may be made to seem
“ ridiculous, which are not so in them-
“ selves; why we ought not to reject the
“ Use of Reason, because, by proceeding on
“ false Principles, Conclusions will appear
“ true which are impossible in Nature, let
“ the vehement and obstinate Declaimers
“ against Ridicule determine¹.”

BUT why so much Indignation against
Declaimers in one who writes in Defence
of *Ridicule*, a Species of *Declamation*? Then
as to *rejecting* the Use of Ridicule, a very
material Distinction is to be made: As a
Mode of Eloquence nobody attempts totally
to reject it, while it remains under the Do-
minion of Reason: But as a *Test of Truth*,
I hope the Reader hath seen sufficient Rea-
son totally to reject it.

NEITHER will the Parallel by any means

¹Page 106.

SECT.
X.

hold good, which the Gentleman hath attempted to draw between the Abuse of *Ridicule* and *Reason*. Because the Imagination, to which the Way of Ridicule applies, is apt to form to itself innumerable fictitious Resemblances of Things which tend to confound Truth with Falsehood : Whereas the natural Tendency of Reason is to separate these apparent Resemblances, and determine which are the *real*, and which the *fictitious*. Although therefore SPINOZA hath advanced many Falsehoods in the Way of speculative Affirmation, and founded his Reasonings on these, yet still Reason will be her own Correctress, and easily discover the Cheat. But if the Imagination be impressed with false Appearances, and the Passion of Contempt strongly excited, neither the *Imagination* nor the *Passion* can ever correct themselves ; but must inevitably be misled, unless *Reason* be called in to rectify the Mistake, and bring back the Passion to its proper Channel.

NAY, so far is the Use of Ridicule, when prior to rational Conviction, from being parallel to Reason, or co-operative with it ; that, on the contrary, it hath a strong Tendency to prevent the Efforts of Reason, and to confound its Operations. It is not pretended

tended that human Reason, though the *ultimate*, is yet in all Cases an *adequate* Test of Truth: It is always fallible, often erroneous: But it would be much less erroneous, were every Mode of Eloquence, and Ridicule above all others, kept remote from its Operations; were no Passion suffered to blend itself with the Researches of the Mind. For Ridicule, working on the Imagination and Passions, disposes the Mind to receive and acquiesce in any Opinion without its proper Evidence. Hence Prejudice arises; and the Mind, which should be *free* to examine and weigh those *real* Circumstances which PROVE SOCRATES to be indeed a divine Philosopher, is drawn by the *prior* Suggestions of *Ridicule* to receive and acquiesce in those false Circumstances, which PAINT him as a *contemptible Sophist*.

To conclude: 'Tis no difficult Matter to point out the Foundation of this Gentleman's Errors concerning Ridicule. They have arisen solely from his mistaking the *Passion of Contempt* for a *judicial Faculty*: Hence all those new-fangled Expressions of---"the Faculty of Ridicule"---"the Sense of Ridicule"---and "the feeling of the Ridiculous:" In the Use of which

S E C T. he seems to have imposed upon himself new
 X. Phrases for Realities, and Words for Things.
 I cannot better illustrate this Remark, than
 by transcribing a Passage from the incom-
 parable LOCKE.---“ Another great Abuse
 “ of Words is, the taking them for Things.
 “ To this Abuse Men are most subject,
 “ who confine their Thoughts to any one
 “ System, and give themselves up to the
 “ firm Belief of the Perfection of any re-
 “ ceived Hypothesis; whereby they come
 “ to be persuaded, that the Terms of that
 “ Sect are so suited to the Nature of Things,
 “ that they perfectly correspond with their
 “ real Existence. Who is there that has
 “ been bred up in the Peripatetic Philoso-
 “ phy, who does not think the ten Names,
 “ under which are ranked the ten Predica-
 “ ments, to be exactly conformable to the
 “ Nature of Things? Who is there of that
 “ School, that is not persuaded, that *sub-*
 “ *stantial Forms, vegetative Souls, Abhorrence*
 “ *of a Vacuum, intentional Species, etc.* are
 “ something real?---“ There is scarce any
 “ Sect in Philosophy has not a distinct Set
 “ of Terms that others understand not.
 “ But yet this *Gibberish*, which, in the
 “ Weakness of human Understanding, serves
 “ so

“ so well to palliate Men’s Ignorance, and ^{SECT.}
 “ cover their Errors, comes by familiar Use X.
 “ amongst those of the same Tribe, to seem
 “ the most important Part of Language, and
 “ of all other the Terms the most signifi-
 “ cant^k.” And now to save the Trouble
 of Repetition, the Reader is left to deter-
 mine how far “ the *Faculty of Ridicule*
 “ feeling the Incongruity”---and “ the *Sense*
 “ of *Ridicule* always *judging right*”---may
 with Propriety be placed among the learned
Gibberish above-mentioned.

’Tis strange this Gentleman should have
 erred so widely in so plain a Subject; when
 we consider, that he hath accidentally
 thrown out a Thought, which, if pursued,
 would have led him to a full View of the
 Point debated: “ The Sensation of Ridi-
 “ cule is not a bare *Perception* of the Agree-
 “ ment or Disagreement of Ideas; but a
 “ *Passion* or *Emotion* of the Mind conse-
 “ quential to that *Perception*^l.”

SECTION XI.

TO return therefore to the noble Wri-^{SECT.}
 ter. As it is evident, that *Ridicule* cannot XI.

^k Locke on *Hum. Understanding*, B. iii. c. 10. § 14.

^l P. 103.

SECT. in general without Absurdity be applied as
 XI. a Test of Truth; so can it least of all be admitted in *examining Religious Opinions*, in the Discussion of which his Lordship seems principally to recommend it. Because, “by
 “inspiring the contending Parties with *mutual Contempt*, it hath a violent Tendency
 “to destroy *mutual Charity*, and therefore
 “to prevent *mutual Conviction*.”

To illustrate this Truth, let us consider the following Instance, which seems clear and full to the Point.

THERE is not perhaps in any Language a bolder or stronger Ridicule, than the well-known Apologue of *The Tale of a Tub*. Its manifest Design is to recommend the *English Church*, and to disgrace the two Extremes of *Popery* and *Puritanism*^m. Now, if we

^mSome indeed have pretended otherwise. Thus Mr. Wotton, in his *Reflections on Learning*, says, “It is a designed Banter upon all that is esteemed sacred among Men.” And the pious Author of the *Independent Whig* affirms it was “the sole open Attack that had been made upon *Christianity* since the Revolution, except the *Oracles of Reason*, and was not inferior in Banter and Malice, to the Attacks of *Celsus*, or *Julian*, or *Porphyry*, or *Lucian*.” p. 399. Where by the Way, the Oddity of the Contrast is remarkable enough; that he should pronounce the *Tale of a Tub* to be a *Libel on Christianity*, while it is in Fact a *Vindication of our Ecclesiastical Establishment*; and at the same Time entitle his own Book a *Vindication of our Ecclesiastical Establishment*, while in Fact it is a *Libel on Christianity*.

consider

consider this exquisite Piece of Raillery as a S E C T.
XI.
Test of Truth, we shall find it important and
vain: For the Question still recurs, whether
MARTIN be a just Emblem of the *English*,
Jack of the *Scotch*, or *Peter* of the *Roman*
Church. All the Points in Debate between
the several Parties are taken for granted in
the Representation: And we must have Re-
course to *Argument*, and to that alone, ere
we can determine the Merits of the Que-
stion.

IF we next consider this Master-piece
of Wit as a Mode of *Eloquence*, we shall
find it indeed of great *Efficacy* in confirm-
ing every Member of the *Church of England*
in his own Communion, and in giving him
a thorough Dislike of those of *Scotland* and
Rome: And so far as this may be regarded
as a Matter of *public Utility*, so far the Ri-
dicule may be laudable.

BUT if we extend our Views so as to
comprehend a larger Plan of *moral Use*; we
shall find this Method of Persuasion is such
as Charity can hardly approve of: For by
representing the one of these Churches un-
der the Character of *Craft and Knavery*,
the other under that of *incurable Madness*,
it must needs tend to inspire every Member

S E C T.
XI.

of the *English* Church who believes the Representation, with such *Hatred* of the one, and *Contempt* of the other, as to prevent all *friendly Debate* and *rational Remonstrance*.

ITS effect on those who hold the Doctrines of CALVIN, or of *Rome*, must be yet worse: Unless it can be proved, that the Way to attract the Love, and convince the Reason of Mankind, is to shew that we hate or despise them. While they revere what we deride, 'tis plain, we cannot *both* view the Subject in the same Light: And though we deride what appears to us *contemptible*, we deride what to them appears *sacred*. They will therefore accuse us of misrepresenting their Opinions, and abhor us as *unjust* and *impious*.

THUS although this noted Apologue be indeed a Vindication of our *English* Church, yet it is such as had been better spared: Because its natural Effect is to create Prejudice, and inspire the contending Parties with mutual Dislike, Contempt, and Hatred.

BUT if the Way of Ridicule is thus wholly to be rejected in treating every *controverted religious* Subject; it will probably be asked, "Where then is it to be applied? Whether "it is reasonable to *calumniate* and *blacken*

“ *it without Distinction?* And whether it is SECT.
 “ not Impiety, thus *to vilify the Gifts of our* XI.
 “ *Maker?*”

AND 'tis certain, that to do this, were absurd and impious. As on the other hand, there is an equal Absurdity and Impiety in confounding that Order of Things which the Creator hath established, and endeavouring to raise a *blind Passion* into the *Throne of Reason*. One Party or other in this Debate hath certainly incurred the Censure : The Censure is severe, and let it fall where it is deserved. I know none that endeavour to vilify and blacken Ridicule without Distinction, unless when it presumes to elevate itself into a *Test of Truth* : And then, as a Rebel to the Order and Constitution of Nature, it ought to be resolutely encountered and repelled, till it take Refuge in its own inferior Station.

THE proper Use of Ridicule therefore is, “ to disgrace *known* Falsehood :” And thus, negatively at least, “ to enforce *known* “ Truth.” Yet this can only be affirmed of certain Kinds of Falsehood or Incongruity, to which we seem to have appropriated the general Name of *Folly* : And among the several Branches of this, chiefly,

SECT. I think, to AFFECTATION. For as every
XI. *Affectation* arises from a false pretence to
Praise, so a *Contempt* incurred tends to con-
vince the Claimant of his *Error*, and thus
becomes the natural Remedy to the Evil.

MUCH more might be said on this Head.
We might run through numerous Divisions
and Subdivisions of *Folly*: But as the Task
would be both insignificant and endless, I
am unwilling to trouble the Reader with
such elaborate Trifles.

IT seems an Observation more worthy of
our Attention and Regard; that *Contempt*,
whence Ridicule arises, being a *selfish Passion*,
and nearly allied to *Pride*, if not absolutely
founded on it; we ought ever to keep a
strict Rein, and in general rather curb than
forward its Emotions. Is there a more im-
portant Maxim in Philosophy than this, that
we should gain a Habit of controuling our
Imaginations and Passions by the Use of
Reason? Especially those that are rather of
the *selfish* than the *benevolent* Kind? That
we should not suffer our *Fears* to sink us in
Cowardice, our *Joys* in *Weakness*, our *An-*
ger in *Revenge*? And sure there is not a
Passion that infects human Life, whose Con-
sequences are so generally pernicious as those
of

of *indulged Contempt*. As the common SECT. XI. Occurrences of Life are the Objects which afford it Nourishment, so by this means it is kept more constantly in Play, than any other Affection of the Mind: And is indeed the general Instrument by which Individuals, Families, Sects, Provinces, and Nations, are driven from a State of mutual Charity, into that of Bitterness and Dissention. We proceed from Raillery to Railing; from Contempt to Hatred. Thus if the Love of Ridicule be not in itself a Passion of the malevolent Species, it leads at least to those which are so. Add to this, that the most ignorant are generally the most contemptuous; and they the most forward to *deride*, who are most incapable or most unwilling to *understand*. Narrow Conceptions of Things lead to groundless Derision: And this Spirit of Scorn in its Turn, as it cuts us off from all Information, confirms us in our preconceived and groundless Opinions.

THIS being the real Nature and Tendency of Ridicule, it cannot be worth while to descant much on its Application, or explore its Subserviency to the Uses of Life. For though under the severe Restrictions of Reason, it may be made a proper Instrument

SECT.
XI.

ment on many Occasions, for disgracing *known Folly*; yet the Turn of Levity it gives the Mind, the Distaste it raises to all candid and rational Information, the Spirit of Animosity it is apt to excite, the Errors in which it confirms us when its Suggestions are false, the Extremes to which it is apt to drive us, even when its Suggestions are true; all these conspire to tell us, it is rather to be wished than hoped, that its Influence upon the whole can be considerable in the Service of *Wisdom and Virtue*.

LORD SHAFTESBURY himself, in many other Parts of his Book, strongly insists on the Necessity of bringing the Imagination and Passions under the Dominion of Reason. "The only Poison to *Reason*, says "he, is *Passion*: For *false Reasoning* is soon "redressed, where *Passion* is removed". And it is difficult to assign any Cause that will not reflect some Dishonour on the noble Writer, why he should thus strangely have attempted to privilege this Passion of *Contempt* from so necessary a Subjection. Let it suffice, in Conclusion, to observe; that Inconsistencies must ever arise and be persisted in, when a roving Fancy, con-

^a *Wit and Humour*, Part ii. § 1.

ducted

conducted by *Spleen* and *Affectation*, goes in SECT.
Quest of idle Novelties, without subjecting XI.
itself to the just Restraints of *Reason*.

UPON the whole: This new Design of
discovering Truth by the *vague* and *un-*
steady Light of Ridicule, puts one in Mind
of the honest *Irishman*, who applied his
Candle to the *Sun-Dial*, in order to see how
the *Night* went.

ESSAYS

ON THE

Characteristics, etc.

ESSAY II.

On the Motives to VIRTUE, and
the Necessity of Religious Principle.

SECTION I.

HAVING considered the noble Wri-^{SECT.}
ter's two first Treatises, so far as they ^{I.}
regard the *Use of Ridicule*, we now come to
his *Soliloquy*, or *Advice to an Author*. And
here, bating only a few accidental Passages,
which will be occasionally pointed out here-
after, we shall have little more to do, than
to approve and admire: The whole Dissert-
ation being, in its general Turn, one con-
H 7 tinued

ESSAY II. continued Instance of its Author's Knowledge and refined Taste in Books, Life, and Manners. I could dwell with Pleasure on the Beauties of this Work, if indeed they needed an Explanation: But that noble Union of Truth and Eloquence which shines through the whole, as it supercedes, so it would disgrace any Attempt of this Kind. To the Work itself therefore I recommend the Reader.

THE noble Writer having thus prepared us for the Depths of Philosophy, by enjoining an unfeigned and rigorous *Self-Examination*; proceeds to that highest and most interesting of all Subjects, *The Motives to virtuous Action*. And here it will probably appear, that with a Variety of useful Truths, he hath blended several plausible Mistakes, which, when more nearly viewed, seem to be attended with a Train of very extraordinary Consequences. What he hath given us on this Subject, lies chiefly in the two Treatises, which compose his second Volume: But as he frequently refers us to the other Parts of his Writings, where he hath accidentally treated the same Points in a more explicit Manner; so the same Liberty of comparing one Passage with another,

On the Motives to VIRTUE.

III

other, will, I apprehend, be judged reasonable by the candid Reader. Thus we shall more effectually penetrate into his true Scope and Intention; and draw off, as far as may be, that Veil of *Mystery*, in which, for Reasons best known to himself, he hath so often wrapped his Opinions.

SECT.

I.

SECTION II.

'TIS no uncommon Circumstance in Controversy, for the Parties to engage in all the Fury of Disputation, without precisely instructing their Readers, or truly knowing themselves, the Particulars about which they differ. Hence that fruitless Parade of Argument, and those opposite Pretences to Demonstration, with which most Debates, on every Subject, have been infested. Would the contending Parties first be sure of their own Meaning (a Species of Self-Examination which, I think, the noble Writer hath not condescended to mention) and then communicate their Sense to others in plain Terms and Simplicity of Heart, the Face of Controversy would soon be changed: And real Knowledge, instead of imaginary Conquest, would be the noble Reward of literary Toil.

SECT.

II.

IN

ESSAY

II.

IN the mean Time, a History of *Logomachies*^a well executed, would be no unedifying Work. And in order to open a Path to so useful an Undertaking, I will venture to give the present Section as an Introduction to it: For sure, among all the Questions which have exercised the Learned, this concerning *the Motives to Virtue* hath given Rise to the greatest Profusion of loose Talk and ambiguous Expression. The Argument hath been handled by several of great Name: And it might possibly be deemed Presumption to differ from any of them, had they not so widely differed among themselves. Much hath been said, and various have been their Opinions concerning our *Motives to Virtue*; but little hath been said in any definitive Manner, on the previous and fundamental Question, *What Virtue is?* By which I do not mean, what Actions are called Virtuous, for, about that, Mankind are pretty well agreed; but, what that *characteristic Circumstance* is, on Account of which, these Actions are called *virtuous*. Till we have determined this with all possible Precision, we cannot determine “upon what Foundation Man-

^a A Strife about Words.

“kind can be moved to the Practice of SECT.
“them.” Our first Enquiry therefore must II.
be, concerning the *Nature of Virtue*: In
the Investigation of which, the Moralists
of most Ages seem to have been remarkably
defective.

LET us first consider what our noble Au-
thor hath said on this Subject. He tells
us, “The Mind cannot be without its Eye
“and Ear; so as to discern Proportion, dis-
“tinguish Sound, and scan each Sentiment
“and Thought which comes before it. It
“can let nothing escape its Censure. It
“feels the soft and harsh, the agreeable
“and disagreeable in the Affections; and
“finds a *foul* and *fair*, an *karmonious* and a
“*dissonant*, as really and truly here, as in
“any musical Numbers, or in the outward
“Forms and Representations of sensible
“Things. Nor can it withhold its Admi-
“ration and Extasy, its Aversion and Scorn,
“any more in what relates to one, than to
“the other of these Subjects. So that to
“deny the common natural Sense of a
“*sublime* and *beautiful* in Things, will ap-
“pear an *Affectation* merely to any one
“who considers duly of this Affair^b.” The

^b *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, Part iii. § 3.

ESSAY II. Perception of this Beauty he calls the *moral Sense* or *Taste*; and affirms, that Virtue consists in “ a perfect Conformity of our Affections and Actions with this supreme Sense and Symmetry of Things.” Or, to use his own Words, “ The Nature of Virtue consists in a certain just Disposition or proportionable Affection of a rational Creature towards the *moral Objects* of *Right and Wrong*.”

THE next Writer I shall mention is the learned and amiable Dr. CLARKE. He thinks it necessary to reject this Idea of Virtue, which the noble Writer had established; and as a surer Foundation, than what mere *Affection, Sense, or Taste* could produce, lays the Basis of Virtue in *Reason*: And insists, that its true Nature lies in “ a Conformity of our Actions, with certain eternal and immutable Relations and Differences of Things. That from these, which are necessarily perceived by every rational Agent, there naturally arise certain *moral Obligations*, which are of themselves incumbent on all, antecedent to all positive Institution, and to all Expectation of Reward or Punishment^d.”

^c *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, Partiii. § 1. ^d Clarke's *Demonst.* passim.

AFTER these, comes an ingenious and candid Writer, and in Opposition to both these Schemes of Moral, fixes the Nature of Virtue in "a Conformity of our Actions with *Truth*." He affirms, that "no Act, whether Word or Deed, of any Being, to whom moral Good and Evil are imputable, that interferes with any *true* Proposition, or *denies* any thing to be as it is, can be *right*. That, on the contrary, every Act is right which does not contradict *Truth*, but treats every thing as being "what it is."

SECT.
II.

THERE are, besides these, several other philosophical Opinions concerning the Nature of Virtue: as, that it consists in following *Nature*—in avoiding all *Extremes*—in the Imitation of the *Deity*. But these are still more loose and indeterminate Expressions, if possible, than the former. If therefore the first should appear vague and ineffectual, the latter must of Course fall under an equal Censure.

Now it will appear, that all the three Definitions of Virtue, which Lord SHAFTESBURY, Dr. CLARKE, and Mr. WOLLASTON have given us, in designed Opposition to

*Wollaston's *Rel. of Nat.* § 1. *passim*.

ESSAY
II.

each other, are equally defective; “Be-
“ cause they do not give us any more parti-
“ cular or determinate Ideas, than what we
“ have from that *single Word*, which with
“ so much fruitless Labour they attempt to
“ define.”

LET us first examine the noble Writer’s
Definition in this View. He says, that
“ Virtue consists in a Conformity of our Af-
“ fections with our natural Sense of the
“ Sublime and Beautiful in Things, or with
“ the moral Objects of Right and Wrong.”
—Now, what new Idea do we gain from
this pompous Definition? Have we not the
same general Idea from the Word *Virtue*, as
from the more diffused Expression of *the*
Sublime and Beautiful of Things? And can-
not we gather as much from either of these,
as from the subsequent Phrase, “ the *moral*
Objects of Right and Wrong?”—They are
all general Names, relative to something
which is yet unknown, and which is no
more explained by the pretended Definition,
than by the Word which is attempted to
be defined. Indeed, when his Lordship
further affirms, that to relieve the Needy, or
help the Friendless, is an Instance of this
Sublime and Beautiful of Things, we then
obtain

obtain a more determinate Idea, with Regard to that particular Case. But still we are as much as ever at a Loss for a general *Criterion* or *Test*, by which the Virtue of our other Actions is to be determined. To say, therefore, that Virtue consists in acting according to the *fair*, the *handsome*, the *sublime*, the *beautiful*, the *decent*, the *moral Objects* of *Right* and *Wrong*, is really no more than ringing Changes upon Words. We might with equal Propriety affirm, "that *Virtue* consists in *acting virtuously*." This Deficiency Mr. WOLLASTON clearly saw. "They, says he, who reckon nothing to be "*(morally)* good, but what they call *bonestum*, may denominate Actions according as that is, or is not the Cause or End of them: But then, what is *bonestum*? "Something is still wanting to measure "Things by, and to separate the *bonesta* "from the *inbonesta*."

DR. CLARKE's Definition seems not to include any thing more precise or determinate, than the noble Writer's. He affirms, that "Virtue consists in a Conformity of our "Actions with right Reason, or the eternal and immutable Relations and Dif-

^f *Rel. of Nat.* p. 22.

ESSAY^{II.} "ferences of Things." Here then a parallel Question ariseth, "What is *right Reason*, and what these *eternal Relations* which "are affirmed, by the learned Writer, to be "the Test or Criterion of Virtue?" And 'tis observable, that when he comes to prove the Truth and Reality of these *Relations*, he is forced to resolve it into a *self-evident* Proposition. "These Things, saith he, are so "notoriously plain and *self-evident*, that nothing but the extremest Stupidity of "Mind, Corruption of Manners, or Per- "verseness of Spirit, can possibly make any "Man entertain the least Doubt concerning "them^z." Thus too, his ingenious *Advocate*, when pushed by his Adversary to declare, whether he perceives the Truth of these Relations by *Proof* or *Intuition*, confesses "they may be looked upon as *self-evident*^h." Here then we may observe a strong Coincidence between the noble Writer's System of Expression, and this of Dr. CLARKE: For as the one affirms, that the *Sublime* and *Beautiful* of Things is *self-evident*, so the other affirms the same of the *Fit* and *Reasonable*. And as the *Sublime* and

^z *Demonst.* p. 50.
Mor. Goodness, p. 10.

^h Balguy's *Traëts*, 2^d Part, of

Beautiful give us no more determinate Ideas, SECT.
II.
than the *Virtuous*, so neither can we obtain
any additional Information from the *Fit* and
Reasonable. We are equally at a Loss to
know what is *fit* and *reasonable*, as to know
what is *virtuous*: Therefore the *one* can ne-
ver be an adequate Definition of the other.
Here too, Mr. WOLLASTON plainly saw the
Want of Precision. As to those, he saith,
“ who make *right Reason* to be a Law—
“ it is true, that whatever will bear to be
“ tried by right Reason, is right; and that
“ which is condemned by it, wrong:—But
“ the Manner in which they have delivered
“ themselves, *is not yet explicit enough*. It
“ leaves Room for so many Disputes and
“ *opposite right Reasons*, that nothing can be
“ settled, while every one pretends that *his*
“ Reason is right¹.”

Now it will doubtless appear a Circum-
stance of Singularity, that Mr. WOLLAS-
TON, who saw the essential Defects of these
two Definitions, should himself offer a *third*,
which is precisely liable to the same Ob-
jection. “ Virtue, saith this learned Wri-
“ ter, consists in a Conformity of our
“ Actions with Truth; in treating every

¹ *Rel. of Nat.* p. 23.

ESSAY II. "thing as being what it is." Well: be it so. Yet the Question still recurs, what is *moral Truth*? And this demands a *Definition* no less than *Virtue*, which was the Thing to be defined. Had Lord SHAFTESBURY lived to see this new Theory proposed, how naturally would he have retorted Mr. WOLASTON's Objection? "You, Mr. WOLASTON, reckon nothing to be *morally Good*, but what you call *Truth*: And you may indeed denominate Actions, according as that is, or is not, the Cause or End of them: But then, what is *Truth*? Something further is still wanting to measure Things by, and to separate *Truth* from *Falseness*."—Thus too would Dr. CLARKE have naturally replied: "'Tis true, that whatever will bear to be tried by *Truth*, is right; and that which is condemned by it, wrong: But the Manner in which you have delivered yourself, is not yet explicit enough. You have rather confounded my Definition, than given a new one of your own: All that you have added, is an Impropriety of Speech. I speak of the *Rectitude* of Actions, you of the *Truth* of Actions; which I call an Impropriety of Speech, because

“ because *Truth* relates to *Affirmations*, not SECT.
II.
 “ to *Actions*; to what is *said*, not to what
 “ is *done*. But supposing the Propriety of
 “ your Expression, what further Criterion
 “ have you gained? You confess, that *Truth*
 “ is discovered by *Reason* only; for you
 “ say, that *to deny Things to be as they are,*
 “ *is the Transgression of the great Law of our*
 “ *Nature, the Law of Reason*^k. If so, then
 “ Reason is as good a Guide as Truth:
 “ We can as certainly know what is *right*
 “ *Reason*, as what is *Truth*. If therefore
 “ my Definition is defective, yours must be
 “ so too. If mine leaves Room for so many
 “ Disputes and *opposite right Reasons*, that
 “ nothing can be settled, while every one
 “ pretends that his Reason is *right*; yours
 “ must of Necessity be liable to the same
 “ Objection, must leave Room for so many
 “ Disputes and *opposite Truths*, that nothing
 “ can be settled, while every one pretends
 “ that his Idea of *Truth* is the *right* one.
 “ Truth, then, can never be a better Cri-
 “ terion than Reason, because our Idea of
 “ *Truth* must always *depend* upon our
 “ *Reason*.”

^k *Rel. of Nat.* p. 15.

THUS

ESSAY

II.

THUS it should seem, that our three celebrated Writers have not given the Satisfaction which might have been expected in an Affair of such philosophical Importance. Their common Attempt is to define the Nature, or fix the Criterion of Virtue: To this End, the first affirms, it consists in a Conformity of our Actions to the *Fair* and *Handsome*, the *Sublime* and *Beautiful* of Things: The Second, the *Fitness*, *Reasons*, and *Relations* of Things: The Third, the *Truth* of Things. But inasmuch as these general Terms of *Beauty*, *Fitness*, *Truth*, convey not any more determinate Idea, than that of *Virtue*, which they are brought to define; the several pretended Definitions are therefore *inadequate* and *defective*¹.

¹Let it be observed once for all, that the Definitions here censured as defective, are little more than direct Transcripts of what the old *Greek* Philosophers, and *Tully* after them, have said on the same Subject. To shew how generally this Kind of Language infects the Writers on Morality, we need only transcribe the subsequent Passage from a Follower of the noble Writer, "We need not therefore be at a Loss, said he, for a " *Description* of the sovereign Good.—We may call it " *Rectitude* of Conduct.—If that be too contracted, we " may enlarge, and say, 'tis—to live perpetually selecting and rejecting according to the *Standard* of our *Being*. If we are for still different Views, we may say, " 'tis—to live in the Discharge of *Moral Offices*—to

WHAT then is *Virtue*? Let us consider ^{SECT.}
its true Nature in the following Section. ^{II.}

SECTION III.

THERE are few among Mankind, who ^{SECT.}
have not been often struck with Admi- ^{III.}
ration at the Sight of that Variety of Co-
lours and Magnificence of Form, which ap-
pear in an Evening *Rainbow*. The *un-*
instructed in Philosophy consider that splen-
did Object, not as dependent on any other,
but as being possessed of a *self-given* and
original Beauty. But he who is led to
know, that its Place and Appearance al-
ways varies with the Situation of the *Sun*;
that when the latter is in his Meridian, the
former becomes an inconsiderable Curve
skirting the Horizon; that as the Sun de-
scends, the *Rainbow* rises; till at the Time
of his *Setting*, it encompasses the Heavens
with a glorious Circle, yet *dies* away when
he *disappears*; the Enquirer is then con-
vinced, that this gay Meteor did but shine

“ live according to Nature—To live according to *Virtue*
“ —to live according to *just Experience* of those Things
“ which happen around us.” Three Treatises by
J. H. Treat. 3^d, p. 207.

with

ESSAY with a *borrowed* Splendor, derived from the
 II. Influence of that mighty *Luminary*.

THUS, in like Manner, though the *Beauty, Fitness, Truth*, or VIRTUE, of all those Actions which we term *morally Good*, seem at first View to reside in the several Actions, in an original and independent Manner; yet on a nearer Scrutiny we shall find, that, properly speaking, their Nature ariseth from their *Ends* and *Consequences*; that as these *vary*, the Nature of the several Actions *varies* with them; that from these alone, Actions gain their *Splendor*, are denominated *morally Good*, and give us the Ideas of *Beauty, Fitness, Truth*, or *Virtue*.

THE first Proofs in Support of this Opinion shall be drawn from those very Writers who most zealously oppose it. And here 'tis first remarkable, that "while they attempt to fix their several Criterions of absolute, independent Beauty, Fitness, and Truth; they are obliged to admit *Exceptions*, which effectually destroy what they design to establish." The following Instance, from one of these celebrated Writers, is equally applicable to the other two.

MR.

MR. WOLLASTON speaks in the following S E C T.
III.
Manner: "To talk to a Post, or otherwise
" treat it as if it was a Man, would surely
" be reckoned an *Absurdity*, if not *Dis-*
" *traction*. Why? Because this is to treat
" it as being what it is not. And why
" should not the converse be reckoned as
" bad; that is, to treat a Man as a Post?
" As if he had no Sense, and felt not In-
" juries which he doth feel; as if to him
" Pain and Sorrow were not Pain; Happi-
" ness not Happiness^m." Now, you see
that on his Scheme of absolute irrelative
Truth, the Absurdity of *talking to a Post* is
precisely of the same Nature with that of
injuring a Man: For in both Cases, we
treat the Post and the Man, as being *what*
they are not. Consequently, on this Philo-
sophy, if it be morally Evil to *injure a Man*,
'tis likewise morally Evil to *talk to a Post*.
Not that I suppose Mr. WOLLASTON would
have maintained this Consequence. He
knew that the First of these Absurdities
would only deserve the Name of *Folly*;
the latter, of a *Crime*. As therefore he
allows that Truth is equally violated in
either Case; as there is something *highly*

^m *Rel. of Nat.* p. 15.

ESSAY

H.

immoral in the one, and *nothing immoral* in the other, here is an Exception which overturns his Principle: which proves that the Morality or Immorality of Actions depends on something *distinct* from mere abstract, irrelative *Truth*.

THE same Exception must be admitted on Dr. CLARKE'S System of Expression. For iure, 'tis neither *fit* nor *reasonable*, nor agreeable to the Relations of Things, that a Man should talk to a Post. Yet, although it be admitted as *irrational* and *absurd*, I do not imagine, any of Dr. CLARKE'S Defenders would say it was *immoral*. So again, with regard to Lord SHAFTESBURY, 'tis clear there can be nothing of the *Sublime* or *Beautiful* in this Action of talking to a Post: On the contrary, there is (to use his own Manner of Expression) an apparent Indecency, Impropriety, and *Dissonance* in it. Yet, although his Admirers might justly denominate it *incongruous*, they would surely be far from branding it as *vile*. Here then the same Exception again takes place, which demonstrates that *Virtue* cannot consist either in *abstract Fitness* or *Beauty*; but that something further is required in order to constitute its Nature.

POSSIBLY therefore, the Patrons of these SECT.
several Theories may alledge, that Actions III.
which relate to *inanimate Beings* only, can properly be called no more than *naturally* beautiful, fit, or true: But that *moral* Fitness, Beauty, or Truth, can only arise from such Actions as relate to Beings that are *sensible* or *intelligent*. Mr. BALGUY expressly makes this Exception: He affirms, that “moral Actions are such as are knowingly directed towards some Object intelligent or sensible.”

AND so far indeed this Refinement approaches towards the Truth, as it excludes all *inanimate* Things from being the Objects of moral Good and Evil. Yet even this Idea of moral Beauty, Fitness, or Truth, is highly indeterminate and defective: Because innumerable Instances may be given, of Actions directed towards Objects sensible and intelligent, some of which Actions are manifestly *becoming*, *fit*, or *true*, others as manifestly *incongruous*, *irrational*, and *false*, yet none of them, in any Degree, *virtuous* or *vicious*, *meritorious* or *immoral*. Thus to speak to a Man in a Language he understands, is an Action *becoming*, *fit*, or *true*;

² *First Treat. on Moral Goodness*, p. 28.

ESSAY
II. 'tis treating him according to the Order, Relations, and Truth of Things; 'tis treating him according to *what he is*. On the contrary, to speak to him in a Language he understands not, is an Action neither *becoming, fit, nor true*; 'tis treating him according to *what he is not*; 'tis treating him *as a Poet*. But although the first of these Actions be undeniably becoming, fit, or true, who will call it *Virtue*? And though the latter be undeniably incongruous, irrational, and false, who will call it *Vice*? Yet both these Actions are directed towards a Being that is sensible and intelligent. It follows therefore, that an Action is not either morally Good or Evil, merely because it is conformable to the Beauty, Fitness, or Truth of Things, even though it be directed towards an Object both *sensible* and *intelligent*; but that something still further, some more distinguishing and characteristic Circumstance is necessary, in order to fix its real Essence.

WHAT this peculiar Circumstance may be, we come now to enquire. And the first Lights in this Enquiry shall be borrowed from these very celebrated Writers, whom we have here ventured to oppose.
 For

For such is the Force and Energy of Truth, S E C T.
III.
that, while they are attempting to involve her in a Cloud of Metaphysics, she breaks through the mystic Veil they had prepared and woven for her with so much Art, and diffuseth a Stream of genuine Lustre, which the most obdurate Prejudice can hardly withstand.

AND first, though the *noble* Writer every where attempts to fix an original, independent, moral Beauty of Action, to which every thing is to be referred, and which itself is not to be referred to any thing furtherⁿ: Yet when he comes to an Enumeration of those *particular* Actions, which may be called morally Beautiful, he always singles out such as have a direct and necessary Tendency to *the Happiness of Mankind*. Thus he talks of the Notion of a *public Interest*^o, as necessary towards a proper Idea of Virtue: He speaks of public Affection in the same Manner; and reckons Generosity, Kindness, and Compassion, as the Qualities which alone can render Mankind truly Virtuous. So again, when he fixes the Bounds of the social Affections, he evidently refers

ⁿ *Essay on Wit — Soliloquy — Enquiry — Moralists — Miscellanies — passim.*

^o *Enqu. B. i. p. 2. § 3.*

ESSAY
II.

us to the same End of human Happiness.
 “ If Kindness or Love of the most natural
 “ Sort be immoderate, it is undoubtedly
 “ vicious. For thus over-great Tenderness
 “ *destroys the Effect of Love* ; and excessive
 “ Pity renders us incapable of giving Suc-
 “ cour^a.” When he fixes the proper De-
 grees of the *private Affections*, he draws his
 Proof from this one Point, “ that by
 “ having the Self-Passions too intense or
 “ strong, a Creature becomes miserable^r.”
 Lastly, when he draws a Catalogue of such
 Affections, as are most opposite to Beauty
 and moral Good, he selects “ *Malice, Hatred*
 “ *of Society — Tyranny — Anger — Revenge*
 “ *— Treachery — Ingratitude^s*.” In all these
 Instances, the Reference to human Happi-
 ness is so particular and strong, that from
 these alone an unprejudiced Mind may be
 convinced, that the Production of *human*
Happiness is the great universal Fountain,
 whence our Actions derive their *moral*
Beauty.

THUS again, though the excellent Dr.
 CLARKE attempts to fix the Nature and
 Essence of Virtue in certain Differences,
 Relations, and Fitnesses of Things, to which

^a *Enqu. B. i. p. 2. § 3.*

^r *Ibid.*

^s *Ibid.*

our Actions ought ultimately to be referred; S E C T.
III.
yet in enumerating the several Actions which he denominates *morally Good*, he mentions none, but what evidently promote the same great End, “the Happiness of Man.” He justly speaks of the *Welfare* of the *Whole*, as being the *necessary* and most *important* Consequence of *virtuous* Action. He tells us, “that it is *more fit* that GOD should regard “the *Good* of the *whole* Creation, than that “he should make the *Whole* continually “miserable: That all Men should endeavour to promote the *universal Good* and “*Welfare* of all; than that all Men should “be continually contriving the *Ruin* and “*Destruction* of all.” Here again, the Reference is so direct and strong to *the Happiness of Mankind*, that even from the Instances alledged by the worthy Author, it appears, that a Conformity of our Actions to this great End, is the very Essence of *moral Rectitude*.

MR. WOLLASTON is no less explicit in this particular: For in every Instance he brings, *the Happiness* of Man is the single End to which his Rule of Truth verges in an unvaried Manner. Thus in the Passage

: *Demonst.* p. 45, &c.

K 2

already

ESSAY
II.

already cited, though he considers the *talk-
ing to a Post* as an *Absurdity* he is far from
condemning it as an *immoral* Action: But
in the same Paragraph, when he comes to
give an Instance of the Violation of *moral*
Truth, he immediately has recourse to *Man*;
and not only so, but to the *Happiness* of
Man. “Why, saith he, should not the
“converse be reckoned as bad; that is, to
“treat a *Man* as a *Post*; as if he had no
“*Sense*, and *felt* not *Injuries*, which he doth
“*feel*; as if to him *Pain* and *Sorrow* were
“not *Pain*; *Happiness* not *Happiness*?” At
other Times he affirms, that “the *Impor-
tance* of the Truths on the one and the
“other Side should be diligently *compared*.”
And I would gladly know, how one Truth
can be more important than another, un-
less upon this Principle, and in Reference
to the *Production of Happiness*. Himself
indeed confirms this Interpretation, when
he speaks as follows: “The Truth violated
“in the former case was, B had a Property
“in that which gave him such a Degree of
“*Happiness*: That violated in the latter was,
“B had a Property in that which gave him
“a *Happiness* vastly *superior* to the other:

* *Rel. of Nat.* p. 19.

“The

“ The Violation *therefore* in the latter Case S E C T.
 “ was *upon this Account* a vastly greater III.
 “ Violation than in the former*.”

THESE Evidences may seem sufficient :
 But that all possible Satisfaction may be given in a Circumstance which is of the greatest Weight in the present Question, these further Observations may be added.

As therefore these celebrated Writers give no Instances of moral Beauty, Fitness, or Truth, but what finally relate to the Happiness of Man ; so, if we appeal to the common Sense of Mankind, we shall see that the Idea of Virtue hath never been universally affixed to any Action or Affection of the Mind, unless where this Tendency to produce Happiness was at least *apparent*. What are all the black Catalogues of Vice or moral Turpitude, which we read in History, or find in the Circle of our own Experience, what are they but so many Instances of *Misery produced* ? And what are the fair and amiable Atchievements of *Legislators, Patriots, and Sages* renowned in Story, what but so many Efforts to raise Mankind from Misery, and establish the public Happiness on a sure Foundation ?

* *Rel. of Nat.* p. 21.

ESSAY
II.

The first are *vicious, immoral, deformed*, because there we see Mankind *afflicted* or *destroyed*: The latter are *virtuous, right, beautiful*, because here we see Mankind *preserved* and *assisted*.

BUT that *Happiness* is the last Criterion or Test, to which the moral Beauty, Truth, or Rectitude of our Affections is to be referred, the two following Circumstances *demonstrate*: First, “those very Affections and “Actions, which, in the ordinary Course of “Things, are approved as virtuous, do “change their Nature, and become vicious “in the strictest Sense, when they contradict this fundamental Law, of the greatest “publick Happiness.” Thus, although in general it is a Parent’s Duty to prefer a Child’s Welfare, to that of another Person, yet, if this natural and just Affection gain such Strength, as to tempt the Parent to violate the *Public* for his Child’s *particular* Welfare; what was before a *Duty*, by this becomes immoderate and *criminal*. This the noble Writer hath allowed: “If Kindness “or Love of the most natural Sort be *immoderate*, it is undoubtedly *vicious*.” And hence, he says, “the Excess of motherly

’ *Enq. on Virtue.*

“ Love

“ Love is owned to be a vicious Fond-^{SECT.}
 “ nefs². The same *Variation* takes Place ^{III.}
 with regard to every other Relation between
 Man and Man. Infomuch, that the supe-
 rior Regards which we owe to our Family,
 Friends, Fellow-Citizens, and Countrymen
 —Regards which, in their proper Degree,
 aspire to the amiable and high Names of
domestic Love, Friendship, Patriotism—
 when once they desert and violate the grand
 Principle of *universal Happiness*, become a
vicious Fondness, a mean and odious *Parti-*
ality, justly stigmatized by all, as ignomini-
 ous and *unworthy*.

SECONDLY, with such uncontrouled Au-
 thority does this great Principle command
 us; that “ Actions, which are in their own
 “ Nature most shocking to every *humane*
 “ Affection, lose at once their moral Deformi-
 “ mity, when they become subservient to
 “ the general Welfare; and assume both
 “ the Name and the Nature of Virtue.”
 For what is more contrary to every gentle
 and kind Affection, that dwells in the hu-
 man Breast, than to shed the Blood, or de-
 stroy the Life of Man? Yet the ruling Prin-
 ciple above-mentioned, can reconcile us

² *Eng. on Virtue.*

ESSAY
II.

even to *this*. And when the Necessity of public Example compels us to make a Sacrifice of this Kind; though we may lament the *Occasion*, we cannot condemn the *Fact*: So far are we from branding it as *Murder*, that we approve it as *Justice*: and always defend it on this great Principle alone, *that it was necessary for the public Good*.

THUS it appears, that those Actions which we denominate Virtuous, Beautiful, Fit, or True, have not any absolute and independent, but a relative and reflected Beauty: And that their Tendency to produce Happiness is the only Source from whence they derive their Lustre. Hence therefore we may obtain a just and adequate Definition of Virtue: Which is no other than “ the ^a Conformity of our Affections with the

^a The Gentlemen above examined seem to have mistaken the *Attributes* of Virtue for its *Essence*. Virtue is procuring Happiness: To procure Happiness is *beautiful, reasonable, true*; these are the *Qualities* or *Attributes* of the Action: But the Action itself, or its *Essence*, is procuring Happiness.

The Reader who is curious to examine further into this Subject, may consult the *Prelim. Dissert. to Dr. LAW's Translation of KING's Origin of Evil*: Together with several Passages in the *Translator's Notes*, where he will find *Sense* and *Metaphysics* united in a very eminent and extraordinary Degree.

“ public

“ public Good :” Or “ the voluntary Pro-
“ duction of the greatest Happiness.”

S E C T.
III.

S E C T I O N IV.

IT may possibly seem strange that so
much has been thought necessary to be op-
posed to these metaphysical *Refinements* con-
cerning the Nature of Virtue: But in Rea-
lity, 'tis a Point of the utmost Consequence:
For these Refinements have given rise to a
plausible Objection, which hath been re-
tailed in a popular Manner by a late wordy
Writer; whose least merit it is to have sup-
plied our modish Coffee-house Philosophers
with such a Variety of fashionable Topics,
that they have never felt the least Want of
that antiquated Assistance derived from
Knowledge, Parts, and Learning.

THIS Gentleman taking Advantage of
these metaphysical Refinements, and parti-
cularly of the noble Writer's imaginary
Scheme of *absolute, irrelative* Beauty, “ the
“ Hunting after which (he elegantly af-
“ firms) is not much better than a wild
“ Goose Chase^b ;” attempts from hence to
demonstrate, for the *Benefit* of his Country,

^b *Fable of the Bees*, vol. i. p. 380. oct. Ed.

that

ESSAY that we are utterly mistaken, when we
 II. "look upon Virtue and Vice as permanent
 "Realities, that must ever be the same in
 "all Countries and all Ages^c:" And thus
 he prosecutes his Argument.

THE Worth or Excellence of every thing
 he says, varies according to Fancy or Opin-
 ion. "Even in human Creatures, what
 "is beautiful in one Country, is not so in
 "another. — Three hundred Years ago,
 "Men were shaved as closely as they are
 "now; since that, they have wore Beards.
 "—How mean and comical a Man looks,
 "that is otherwise well-dressed, in a narrow-
 "brimed Hat, when every body wears
 "broad ones: And again, how monstrous
 "is a very great Hat, when the other Ex-
 "treme has been in Fashion for a considera-
 "ble Time? — The many Ways of laying out
 "a Garden judiciously are almost innumera-
 "ble; and what is called Beautiful in them,
 "varies according to the different *Taste* of
 "Nations and Ages^d." Thus capricious
 and uncertain, he tells us, are our Ideas of
 natural Beauty; and these he brings home
 to the Point of Morals. "In Morals there
 "is no greater Certainty: Plurality of

^c *Fable of the Bees*, p. 372. ^d P. 376.

"Wives

“ Wives is odious among *Christians*, and all
 “ the Wit and Learning of a great Genius
 “ in Defence of it, has been rejected with
 “ Contempt. But Polygamy is not shock-
 “ ing to a *Mahometan*. What Men have
 “ learnt from their Infancy enslaves them,
 “ and the Force of Custom warps Nature,
 “ and at the same Time imitates her in such
 “ a Manner, that it is often difficult to
 “ know, which of them we are influenced
 “ by. In the East formerly, Sisters mar-
 “ ried Brothers, and it was meritorious for
 “ a Man to marry his Mother. Such Al-
 “ liances are abominable: But it is certain,
 “ that whatever Horror we conceive at the
 “ Thoughts of them, there is nothing in
 “ Nature repugnant against them, but what
 “ is built upon Mode and Custom. A re-
 “ ligious *Mahometan* may receive as great an
 “ Aversion against Wine^e.” Hence, with
 great Stretch of Reasoning he concludes,
 “ that Virtue and Vice are not permanent
 “ Realities,” but vary as other Fashions,
 and are subject to no other Law, than that
 of *Fancy* and *Opinion*.

AND so far indeed, this Gentleman seems
 to have argued justly, while he contends

^e *Fable of the Bees*, p. 377, 379.

that

ESSAY II. that mere *Approbation* and *Dislike*, the mere Idea of *Beauty* and *Deformity*, *Truth* or *Rectitude*, without Reference to some further *End*, can never constitute a real or permanent Foundation of *Vice* or *Virtue*. For, as he hath observed, there *have* indeed been considerable Differences of Opinion upon *some Kinds* of moral Beauty and Deformity, in the different Nations and Ages of the World: And each Age and Nation hath ever been alike positive in asserting the Propriety of its own. Therefore, unless we have some further Test, some other distinguishing and characteristic Circumstance to refer to, besides that of mere *Approbation* and *Dislike*, how shall we ever know, which of these *anomalous* Opinions are *right* or *wrong*? If we have nothing further to appeal to, than the mere Propriety of *Taste*, though each may be thoroughly satisfied of the Justness of his own; yet he ought in Reason to allow the same Right of Choice to the rest of Mankind in every Age and Nation: And thus indeed, *moral Beauty* and *Deformity*, *Virtue* and *Vice*, could have no other Law, than that of *Fancy* and *Opinion*.

BUT when the great end of public Happiness is ultimately referred to, as the *one*,

uniform Circumstance that constitutes the SECT.
IV. *Reëtitude* of human Actions; then indeed, *Virtue* and *Vice* assume a more real and permanent Nature: The common *Sense*, nay, the very *Necessities* of Mankind, will urge them to make an unvaried and just *Distinction*: For *Happiness* and *Misery* make too strong an Appeal to all the Faculties of Man, to be borne down by the *Caprice* of Fancy and Opinion. That it was either an accidental or a designed Inattention to the great Principle of *Happiness*, that gave this coarse Writer an Occasion to call in Question the permanent *Reality* of Vice and Virtue, the following Considerations may sufficiently convince us.

SHOULD any one ask, whether *Health* and *Sickness* are two different Things, no Doubt we should answer in the Affirmative: And would surely suspect any Man's Sincerity, who should tell us, that what was accounted Health in one Age or Nation, was accounted Sickness in another. There are likewise such Things as wholesome Food and Poisons: Nor would we entertain a much better Opinion of him who should affirm, that *all* depends upon *Fancy*; that *Bread* or *Milk* are nourishing or destructive, that

ESSAY that *Arsenic* and *Sublimate* are wholesome
 II. or poisonous, as *Imagination* and *Opinion*
 dictate. On the contrary we know, their
 Nature with Respect to Man, is *invariable*:
 The one, universally wholesome, the other,
 poisonous. Further: we know there have
 been Debates among Physicians, about *Re-*
gimen and *Diet*: That some have main-
 tained the Wholesomeness of *animal*, others
 of *vegetable* Food: Some recommended the
 Drinking of *Water*, others of *Wine*. Yet
 none was ever so weak as to conclude from
 these different Opinions about wholesome
Diet, that the nourishing Qualities of *Bread*
 or the noxious ones of *Arsenic*, were not
permanent Realities with regard to Man;
 or, that the first could be made *poisonous*,
 the latter, *wholesome*, by Dint of *Fancy* and
Opinion.

Now, the Case we are debating is exact-
 ly parallel. For sure, the *Happiness* and
Misery of Mankind are Things as distinct as
Health and *Sickness*: Whence it follows,
 that certain Actions, under the same Cir-
 cumstances, must universally produce Hap-
 piness or Misery, as naturally as Food pro-
 duceth Health, or Poison, Sickness and
 Death. We have already seen, that what-
 ever

ever tends to the Good of all, is, by the consent of all, denominated *Virtue*; that whatever is contrary to this great End, is universally branded as *Vice*; in the same Manner, as whatever nourishes the Body is called *Food*; whatever destroys it, *Poison*. Accordingly, we find the Agreement among Mankind as uniform on the one Subject, as on the other. All Ages and Nations having without Exception or Variance maintained, that Humanity, Fidelity, Truth, Temperance, and mutual Benevolence, do as naturally produce Happiness, as Food gives Health to the Body: That Cruelty, Treachery, Lying, Intemperance, Inhumanity, Adultery, Murder, do as naturally give Rise to Misery, as Poison brings on Sicknes and Death.

BUT hath not this Author given such Instances as prove, that what is detested as *Vice* in one Country, is applauded as *Virtue* in another? That *Polygamy* and *incestuous Marriages* have been in some Nations reputed *lawful*, in others *meritorious*? And if one Virtue or Vice be imaginary or *variable*, doth it not clearly follow that *all* are so?

Now a Man of a common Turn of Thought would be apt to make a very different

ESSAY
II.
ferent Inference. If from the *Variety* of Opinions among Mankind as to *some* Virtues or Vices, he concluded *these* were *variable*; then from the universal *Agreement* of Mankind with regard to *other* Virtues and Vices, he would conclude *these* were *fixed* and *invariable*. The *Consent* of Mankind in the *one*, proves as much as their *Disagreement* in the *other*. And 'tis evident that both their *Consent* and *Disagreement* arise from the same Principle: A Principle which destroys the Tenets, which this Author labours to establish. For, to resume our Illustration, as the various Opinions concerning the superior Wholesomeness of this or that kind of *Diet*, does not change the Nature of *Bread* or *Poison*; so neither can the various Opinions concerning *Polygamy* or *Incest*, affect or change the Nature of *Benevolence* and *Generosity*, *Adultery* and *Murder*. 'Tis plain, these various Opinions have been formed "upon such Actions only, "as are not universally and clearly connected with the Happiness or Misery of "Mankind." As these Actions have been deemed productive of the *one* or the *other*, they have been regarded as *Virtues* or *Vices*: But this Variety of Opinions does no
more

more unsettle the Nature of those Actions, SECT. IV. whose *Tendency* is clear and *certain*; than the Debates on the superior Wholesomeness of animal or vegetable *Diet* can change the Nature of *Bread* and *Poison*. Hence it appears, that Virtue and Vice are permanent Realities, and that their Nature is fixed, certain, and *invariable*.

THUS one Extreme produceth another. For the noble Writer and this Gentleman, through a strong Dislike of each other's Systems, have *both* endeavoured to prove *too much*, and in Consequence have proved *nothing*. The one, contending for the permanent *Reality* of Virtue, and, not content to fix it on its proper Basis, attempts to establish certain *absolute* and *immutable* Forms of Beauty, without Regard to any *further End*; and thus, by laying a chimerical Foundation, *betrays* the Cause which he so generously defends. The other, intent on destroying the permanent Reality of Virtue and Vice, and perceiving how weak a Basis the noble Writer had laid for their Establishment, after proving *this* to be imaginary, as wisely as honestly infers, there is no real one in Nature. We now see the Folly of these Extremes: That as on the

ESSAY
II. one Part, *Virtue* and *Vice* are Things merely
relative to the *Happiness* of Man ; so on the
other, while Man continues what he is, all
those *Relations* which concern his *Happi-
ness*, and arise from his present Manner of
Existence, are likewise *permanent* and *im-
mutable*.

SECTION V.

SECT.
V. BUT this idle Objection against the per-
manent *Reality* of *Virtue* and *Vice*, is not
the only one which the Writer last men-
tioned hath laboured, for the Destruction of
Religion and *Virtue*. For the main Drift
and Intention of his Book is to prove no less
a Paradox than this, that “ private Vices are
“ public Benefits.” Now, till this Ob-
jection be removed, our Idea and Definition
of *Virtue* can never be thoroughly esta-
blished. For if *private Vices* be *public Be-
nefits*, then private *Virtues* are public *Mis-
chiefs*. And if so, what becomes of our
Definition ?

THE first notable Circumstance in this
formidable Assertion of Dr. MANDEVILLE,
is its utter Inconsistency with all that he
hath advanced in order to destroy the
Reality of *Vice* and *Virtue*. For if indeed
these

these be mere *Names*, the Creatures of SECT. V. Fancy and Opinion, how can they be attended with any *uniform* Effects? How can they be either public *Benefits*, or public *Evils*?—If on the contrary, they really produce certain uniform Effects, as he hath attempted to prove, how can they be mere *Non-Entities*, the Creatures of Fancy and Opinion? Here lies a gross and palpable Incoherence: Take which of his two Theories you please, the other absolutely destroys it. If Vice be a public *Benefit*, it must be a permanent *Reality*: If it is not a permanent *Reality*, it cannot be a public *Benefit*.

LET us now examine the Foundations on which he hath built this strange Hypothesis. His Book may be analysed into four different Principles, which he hath variously combined, or rather jumbled together, according as each in their Turn would best serve his Purpose.

THE first Principle he lays down, or rather takes for granted, is, “that Man is “a Compound of evil Passions:” In other Words, “that the Gratification of the natural Appetites is in itself a Vice.” There are in his Book, at least a hundred Pages

ESSAY

II.

of the lowest common-place Declamation, all founded on this one Principle, brought from the *solitary Caves* and *Visions* of the *Desart*. Thus the Desire of being esteemed by others, he stigmatizes with the Name of *Pride*: The natural Desire of social Converse between the two Sexes, he distinguisheth by a *grosser* Appellation. In a word, through the whole Course of his Argument, he *supposes* that every *selfish* Appetite (that is, every Appetite which hath regard to *ourself*) is in its own Nature vile and abominable. This the candid Reader will probably think a little hard upon human Nature: That no Man can be *virtuous*, while he endeavours to be *esteemed*, while he loves to quench his Thirst, minister to Posterity, or eat his Dinner. On the Weight of these plain Instances, the Value of this first Principle may be safely left to any Man's impartial Trial.

HAVING thus branded every Gratification of the natural Appetites; he gains from hence a proper Foundation for the second *Pillar* of this *Temple* of Vice. For he acquaints us with great Solemnity, that, of all other Vices, that of *Luxury* is most beneficial to a State: And that if this were banished

banished the Nation, all Kinds of manual Occupations would immediately languish and decay^f. He says indeed, that *Pedants* make Objections to this Vice of Luxury, and tell you, that it *enervates* a People: But he adds, that “since he has seen the World, “the Consequences of Luxury to a Nation, “seem not so dreadful to him as they did^g.” Had he left the Matter here, we should have been at a Loss to know how he would have made out this strange Tale: But the Riddle is cleared up at once, when we hear him say, that “every thing is Luxury, that “is not immediately necessary to make Man “subsist as he is a living Creature^h.”

WE should have been startled perhaps had he assured us, that he had a *Wind-mill* which laid *Eggs*, and bred *young* ones: But how easily had he reconciled us to his Veracity in only saying, that by a *Wind-mill* he meant a *Goose*, or a *Turkey*?

THUS, when he affirms that Luxury produceth public Happiness, we stand ready for some deep and subtle Speculation, to support so wondrous a Paradox. But when he poorly tells us, “that every thing is

^f *Fable of the Bees*, passim.

^g *Ibid.* p. 247.

^h *Ibid.* p. 108.

ESSAY

II.

“Luxury that is not immediately necessary
 “to make Man subsist as he is a living
 “Creature; we laugh not so much at his
 Impudence, as at our own Folly in giving
 Ear to so idle a Prater, who, when we
 thought we had him reforming States, and
 new-modeling Philosophy, is all the while
 playing at *Crambo*.

LEST it should be suspected, that the
 Features of this Man's Folly are here ag-
 gravated, take a Copy of his Countenance
 in one Instance out of many that might be
 given. “The Consequences, saith he, of
 “this Vice of Luxury to a Nation, seem
 “not so dreadful to me as they did.”—For
 “clean Linen weakens a Man no more
 “than Flannel¹.” Now from these Pas-
 sages laid together, it appears; first, that
 Luxury is a Vice; secondly, that to wear
 clean Linen is Luxury; and, therefore, it
 comes out as clear as the Day, “that to
 “wear clean Linen is a Vice.”

SERIOUSLY: The Sophistry here em-
 ployed, is such an Insult as hath been but
 seldom offered to the human Understanding.
 Did ever any Man before—except only a
 Set of wrong-headed Enthusiasts, whose

¹ *Fable of the Bees*, p. 119.

Visions he is here obliged to adopt—did S E C T.
V.
ever any Man maintain, that to use the Bounties of Nature, or enjoy the Conveniences of Life was a criminal Indulgence? Did ever any Man maintain, that *he* could be *viciously* luxurious, who neither *hurt* his *Neighbour* nor *himself*? At this Rate, by an arbitrary Use of Words, and putting one Expression for another, we might boldly advance the most palpable Contradictions, and maintain that Dr. M——D——LE was a Man of Modesty and Virtue.

THUS far we have seen this Writer endeavouring to throw the *false* Colours of *Vice* upon the *natural Passions*, and such a Use of the Gifts of Nature as is really *Innocent*. In examining his two remaining Principles, we shall find him acting a Part the very *reverse*; and with the same Effrontery, endeavouring to throw the *false* Colours of *public Utility* on such *Actions* and *Affections* as are really *criminal* and *destructive*.

To this Purpose he boldly selects some of the most flagrant Crimes; and assures us, that without their happy Influence the Public would suffer exceedingly. Who had ever dreamt, that Mankind receives Benefit

ESSAY from *Thieves* and *House-breakers*? Yet he
 II. tells us, that “if all People were strictly
 “honest, half the Smiths in the Nation
 “would want Employment^k.”

HIGHWAYMEN too, and *Robbers* are useful in their Generation. For “if a Miser
 “should be robbed of five hundred or a
 “thousand Guineas^l, it is certain, that as
 “soon as this Money should come to circu-
 “late, the Nation would be the better for
 “the Robbery, and receive the same and as
 “real a Benefit from it, as if an Archbishop
 “had left the same Sum to the Public^m.”

HE is abundantly rhetorical on “the large
 “Catalogue of solid Blessings that accrue
 “from, and are owing to intoxicating
 “Ginⁿ.” Infomuch, that if the Drunken-

^k *Fable of the Bees*, p. 82.

^l There is a common Error with regard to *Misers*, on which this pretended Argument is built. They are generally accounted the greatest Enemies of *Society*, because they *hoard* the *Wealth* which ought to *circulate*. Now, to give even a *Miser* his due, this is really a groundless Charge: For they seldom *hoard* more than certain useless Papers, in the Shape of *Notes*, *Bonds*, and *Mortgages*: While the *Wealth* which they thus *hoard* in *Imagination*, circulates *freely* among all Ranks of People. The Guilt of the Miser's Passion lies in its being essentially destructive both of Justice and Benevolence.

^m *Fable of the Bees*, p. 83.

ⁿ *Ibid.* p. 89.

ness and Frenzy arising from the excessive Use of this salutary Liquor were curbed by the Magistrate, he seems to foretel the most fatal Consequences to the public Wealth and Welfare.

HERE then he enumerates several real Crimes, which are *necessarily* attended with *great Evils*; and these he demonstrates, are *accidentally* productive of *some Good*. And this indeed is the only Part of his Argument, that is attended with any Degree of Plausibility: For here, it must be owned, there is Room for a dishonest Mind to *confound*, though by no Means to *convince* an impartial Reader. Because the Consequences of these Crimes being of a various and *discordant* Nature, some having the Appearance of *Good*, and others of *Ill* to Society; a *rhetorical* Display of the *former* may possibly induce a superficial Enquirer, who is caught by a Glare of Eloquence, to doubt whether *these* do not really *predominate*. But a moderate Share of Attention will convince us, that this is impossible. Because all the real Vices he mentions, though they be accidentally productive of some Good; yet 'tis such as might effectually be obtained without them. Thus the
Money

ESSAY
II.

Money taken wrongfully by Stealth or Robbery, is only of Service to the Public by its Circulation : But Money may circulate without Stealth or Robbery ; and therefore 'tis neither the Stealth nor Robbery that is of Service to the Public. On the other part, there are great and substantial Evils, which these Crimes, and these alone give Rise to. On this Occasion one might be very large on the Terrors and Distress, the Murders, and consequent Miseries, which the Villanies patronized by this Writer do necessarily produce. One who was Master of Dr. MANDEVILLE'S *Town-Experience*, might draw a striking Picture of honest and industrious Families rowzed from Sleep at Midnight, only to be plundered and destroyed ; of the horrid Attempts of abandoned Wickedness, let loose from Fear by the Security of Darkness ; the Shrieks of ravished Maids and Matrons ; the dying Groans of Brothers, Fathers, Husbands, weltring in their Blood ; the Cries of innocent and helpless Orphans weeping over their murdered Parents, deprived at once of all that were dear to them, of all that could yield them Consolation or Support ; and suffering every vile Indignity, that un-

relenting

relenting Villainy can suggest or perpetrate. S E C T.
V.
And how, think you, does this Scene of domestic Horror change its original Nature, and rise at length into a public Blessing? Why, because the Adventurers, having made off with their Booty, may possibly “lay it out upon a *Harlot*, or squander it “in a *Night-Cellar*, or a *Ginshop*.” And thus the Money circulates through the Nation. But, in the mean Time, our Philosopher hath forgot the helpless Family reduced to Beggary by the Prowess of his *nocturnal Heroes*: He hath forgot that the fond and indulgent Parent might no less probably have laid out the Money in the temperate Maintenance and liberal Education of his Children, which is now squandered in unprofitable *Riot* and *Excess*: That these Destroyers of other Mens Happiness and their own, had they been employed in honest Labour, in the Cultivation of *Lands*, or the Improvement of *Manufactures*, might have done substantial Services to the Public and themselves, without the guilty *Alloy* of unprovoked Mischief. From these Circumstances, impartially compared, ’tis evident, that the only essential Consequence of

° *Fable of the Bees*, p. 84, 85.

ESSAY
II.

private Vice, is public Misery: And thus our Author's new fashioned System of Morals falls back again into nothing.

HIS fourth Principle is much less plausible. Indeed he never applies to this, but when reduced to the last Necessity: When therefore every other Foundation fails him, he attempts to impose upon his Reader's Negligence or Simplicity, by representing Vice as a *Cause*, where in Reality 'tis a *Consequence*. Thus he tells us, "Great Wealth
"and foreign Treasure will ever scorn to
"come among Men, unless you'll admit
"their *inseparable Companions*, Avarice and
"Luxury: Where Trade is considerable,
"Fraud will *intrude*. To be at *once well-*
"*bred and sincere*, is no less than a Contra-
"diction: And therefore whilst Man ad-
"vances in Knowledge, and his Manners
"are polished, we must expect to see at the
"same Time his Desires enlarged, his Ap-
"petites refined, and his *Vices increased* ^{p.}"
So again, having been driven from his other strong Holds by certain impertinent Remarks, whom he wisely dismisseth with an Air of Superiority and Contempt, he takes Refuge in the same ambiguous Phrases:

^p *Fable of the Bees*, p. 201.

As

As that "Vice is *inseparable* from great and ^{SECT.}
"potent Societies, in the same Manner as VI.
"dirty Streets are a necessary Evil, *inse-*
"parable from the *Felicity* of London^a."

Now, though this happy *Simile* may work Wonders in a *Coffee-House*, amongst those who see every *dirty Alley* pregnant with Demonstration; yet, 'tis to be hoped, more serious Readers may distinguish better. And be enabled to tell him, that before they grant his Position, *that private Vice is public Benefit*, they expect he should prove, "that the Dirt in *London Streets*, is "the Cause or Instrument whereby *London* "becomes a populous and flourishing City:" A Proposition almost as remote from common Apprehension, as that *Tenterden Steeple* is the Cause of *Goodwin Sands*. Thus, we see how dextrously he puts the Change upon the unwary Reader; and while he pretends to exhibit an *essential Cause*, flurs him off with an *accidental Consequence*.

INTO these four Principles, all evidently *False* or *Foreign* to the Purpose, his whole Book may be justly analysed. Nor is there one Observation in the Compass of so many hundred Pages, which tends to support the

^a *Fable of the Bees*, Preface, p. 9, &c.

pernicious

ESSAY
II.

pernicious Falsehood that disgraceth his *Title-Page*, but what will naturally resolve itself into one or other of these wretched *Sophisms*. 'Tis therefore unnecessary to lead the Reader through all the *Windings* of this immense *Labyrinth* of Falsehood; 'tis enough, to have given the *Clue* which may safely conduct him through them.

SECTION VI.

SECT.
VI.

HAVING at length gained an adequate Idea of Virtue, and found that it is no other than "the voluntary Production of " the greatest public Happiness;" we may now safely proceed to consider, " what are " the *Motives* by which Mankind can be " induced to the Practice of it?"

AND here we shall find another metaphysical *Cloud* resting upon *this* Path, in itself plain and easy to all Mankind. For the very Notion of the *Motives* to Virtue hath been as much confounded by moral Writers, as the Idea of *Virtue* itself. And here we might travel through another System of *Logomachies*; while one asserts, that we ought to be *moved* to love and *pursue* Virtue, because *she* is *beautiful*; another, because

because Virtue is good; another, because
 Virtue is good in itself; a fourth, because
 Virtue is Truth; a fifth, because it is agree-
 able to Nature; a sixth, because it is agree-
 able to the Relations of Things.

SECT.
 VI.

BUT 'tis supposed that the intelligent Reader, from a Review of the first Section of this Essay, may be convinced, that all these *amusing* Expressions amount to no more than this, "that there is some Reason or other why we ought to practise Virtue; but that the particular Reason doth not appear, notwithstanding all this refined Pomp of Affirmation." And as it hath already been made evident, that the *Essence* of Virtue consists in a Conformity of our Affections and Actions, with the greatest *public Happiness*; so it will now appear, that "the only Reason or Motive, by which Individuals can possibly be induced to the Practice of Virtue, must be the *Feeling* immediate, or the *Prospect* of future *private Happiness*."

DOUBTLESS, the noble Writer's Admirers will despise and reject this, as an unworthy Maxim. For so it hath happened, that in the Height of their Zeal, for supporting his Opinions, they generally stigmatize *private Happiness*,

ESSAY
II.

Happiness, as a Thing scarce worth a wise Man's inquiring after. Indeed, the many ambiguous Phrases of their Master have contributed not a little to this *vulgar Error*. For in one Place, he brands the modern Philosophers and Divines with the Name of Sophisters and Pedants, for "rating Life" by the Number and Exquisiteness of the "pleasing Sensations^r." At other Times he speaks of *Pleasure*, with all the Contempt of an ancient *Stoic*^s. In the same high Style of the *Athenian Porch*, he passeth Judgment on the Hopes of the Religious: "They have made Virtue so mercenary a Thing, and have talked so much of its *Rewards*, that one can hardly tell what there is in it, after all, which can be *worth* rewarding^t." So again, he derides those "modern Projectors, who would new frame the human Heart; and have a mighty Fancy to reduce all its Motions, Balances, and Weights to that one Principle and Foundation of a cool and deliberate *Selfishness*: And thus, Love of one's Country, and Love of Mankind, must also be *Self-Love*^u."

^r *Wit and Hum.* Part iii. § 4.^s *Moral.* Part iii. § 3.^t *Wit*, Part ii. § 3.^u *Ib.*

Now ere we proceed further, it may be ^{SECT.}
necessary to remark, that in some Degree ^{VI.}
there hath been a *Strife about Words* in this
Particular too. For these Expressions of
Selfishness and *Disinterestedness* have been
used in a very *loose* and *indeterminate* Man-
ner. In one Sense a *Motive* is called *disin-*
terested; when it consists in a pure *benevo-*
lent Affection, or a Regard to the *moral*
Sense. In another, no Motive is *disin-*
terested: For even in acting according to
these Impulses of Benevolence and Con-
science, we gratify an Inclination, and act
upon the Principle or *immediate Feeling* of
private Happiness. Thus when we say, "We
"love Virtue for Virtue's Sake;" 'tis only
implied, that we find immediate Happiness
from the Love and Practice of Virtue, with-
out Regard to external or future Conse-
quences.

ANOTHER Source of mutual Misappre-
hension on this Subject hath been "the In-
"troduction of *metaphorical* Expressions in-
"stead of *proper* ones." Nothing is so
common among the Writers on Morality,
as "the Harmony of Virtue"—"the Pro-
"portion of Virtue." So the noble Writer
frequently expresseth himself. But his fa-

M

vourite

ESSAY yourite Term, borrowed indeed from the
 II. Ancients, is "the BEAUTY of Virtue."

—*Quæ si videri posset, mirabiles excitaret amores*^w.—Of this our Author and his Followers, especially the most ingenious of them^x, are so *enamoured*, that they seem utterly to have forgot they are *talking in Metaphor*, when they describe the Charms of this *sovereign Fair*. Infomuch, that an unexperienced Person, who should read their *Encomiums*, would naturally fall into the Mistake of him, who asked the Philosopher, "Whether the Virtues were not "living Creatures^y?" Now this *figurative* Manner, so essentially interwoven into philosophical Disquisition, hath been the Occasion of great Error. It tends to mislead us both with regard to the Nature of Virtue, and our Motives to the Practice of it. For first, it induceth a Persuasion, that Virtue is *excellent* without Regard to any of its Consequences: And secondly, that he must either want Eyes, or common Discernment, who doth not at first Sight fall in Love with this *matchless Lady*.

THEREFORE setting aside, as much as may be, all ambiguous Expressions, it seems

^w Cicero. ^x Mr. Hutcheson. ^y Senecæ Epist. cxiv.
 evident,

evident, that “ a Motive, from its very Na-
 “ ture, must be something that affects our-
 “ self.” If any Man hath found out a Kind
 of Motive which doth not affect *himself*, he
 hath made a deeper Investigation into the
 “ Springs, Weights, and Balances” of the
 human Heart, than I can pretend to. Now
 what can possibly affect *ourselves*, or deter-
 mine us to Action, but either the Feeling
 or Prospect of *Pleasure* or *Pain*, *Happiness*
 or *Misery*?

BUT to come to the direct Proof: 'Tis
 evident, even to Demonstration, that no
Affection can, in the strict Sense, be more
 or less *selfish* or *disinterested* than another;
 because, *whatever* be its *Object*, the *Af-*
fection itself is *still* no other than a *Mode*
 either of *Pleasure* or of *Pain*; and is there-
 fore *equally* to be referred to the *Mind* or
Feeling of the *Patient*, whatever be its *ex-*
ternal Occasion. Indeed, a late Writer of
 Subtilty and Refinement hath attempted to
 make a Distinction here. He says, “ It
 “ hath been observed, that every Act of
 “ Virtue or Friendship is attended with a
 “ secret *Pleasure*; from whence it hath
 “ been concluded, that Friendship and Vir-
 “ tue could not be disinterested. But the

ESSAY II. "Fallacy of this is obvious. The virtuous
 "Sentiment or Passion *produces* the Plea-
 "sure, and does not *arise* from it. I feel
 "a Pleasure in doing good to my Friend,
 "because I love him: but I do not love him
 "for the Sake of that Pleasure²." Now
 to me, the Fallacy of *this* is obvious. For
 in Fact, neither the *Passion*, nor the *Plea-*
sure, are either the *Cause* or the *Consequence*
 of each other; they neither *produce* nor
arise from each other; because, in Reality,
 they are the *same Thing* under *different Ex-*
pressions. This will be clear, if we state the
 Case as follows: "To *love* my Friend, is
 "to *feel* a *Pleasure* in *doing him Good*:" And
 conversely; "to *feel* a *Pleasure* in *doing*
 "Good to my Friend, is to *love him*." Where 'tis plain that the *Terms* are *synony-*
mous. The *Pleasure* therefore is the very
Passion itself; and neither *prior* nor *posterior*
 to it, as this Gentleman supposeth.

AGAIN, that the Pleasures of Benevo-
 lence, and the moral Sense, are strictly
Selfish, in this Sense of the Word, like
 every other Enjoyment, seems evident from
 some parallel Concessions of the noble
 Writer. For these seemingly disinterested

² Hume's *Essays*, *Mor.* and *Polit.* p. 125.

Pleasures he perpetually sets on a Level with the Perceptions of natural Beauty, Order, Harmony, and Proportion. These last are, by all, acknowledged to be of the selfish Kind; therefore the other are so too; being only a *higher Order of the same*, and expressly called so by the noble Writer^b.

SECT.
VI.

THE Reasons why the great universal Principle of *private Happiness* hath not been so clearly seen in the *Benevolent*, as in the *Self-Passions*, seem to be these. First, Ambiguous Expressions, such as have been remarked above. 2dly, Perhaps some Degree of *Pride*, and Affectation of *Merit*; because *Merit* seems to appear in what is called *Disinterest*. 3dly, And perhaps principally, because in the Exercise of the benevolent Passions, the Happiness is essentially *concomitant* with the Passion itself, and therefore is not easily separated from it by the *Imagination*, so as to be considered as a *distinct End*. Whereas in the Passions called *Selfish*, the Happiness sought after is often *unattainable*, and therefore easily and necessarily distinguished by the *Imagination* as a *positive End*. This Circumstance of Union however, as is judiciously remarked

^a *Moralists*, Part ii.

ESSAY^b by one of the noble Writer's Followers^b,
 II. — proves the great Superiority and Excellence
 of the benevolent Affections, considered as a
 Source of Happiness, beyond the Passions
 and Appetites, commonly called the *Selfish*.

BUT although these Observations be necessary, in order to clear up an Affair, which hath been much perplexed with philosophical, or *unphilosophical* Refinements; yet, on a closer Examination, it will appear, in the most direct Manner, from the noble Writer himself, that “there is no other Principle
 “of human Action, but that of the *immediate* or *foreseen* Happiness of the Agent:”
 That all these amusing Speculations concerning the *Comely*, *Fit*, and *Decent*; all these *verbal* Separations between *Pleasure*, *Interest*, *Beauty*, and *Good*, might have been sunk in one *precise* and plain Disquisition, concerning such Actions and Affections as yield a *lasting*, and such as afford only a *short* and transient *Happiness*. For thus, after all, his Lordship explains himself:
 “That *Happiness* is to be pursued, and, in
 “Fact, is always sought after; that the
 “Question is not, who *loves himself*, and

^b Three Treatises, by J. H. Treat. 3^d. On *Happiness*, p. 189.

“who

“ who *not*; but who *loves and serves himself* SECT.
VI.
 “ the *rightest*, and after the *truest* Manner.—
 “ That ’tis the Height of *Wisdom*, no doubt,
 “ to be *rightly Selfish*” — “ Even to leave
 “ Family, Friends, Country, and Society
 “ —in good Earnest, *who would not*, if it
 “ were *Happiness* to do so?”

THESE Expressions are so strongly pointed, as to leave no further Doubt concerning the noble Writer’s Sentiments on this Subject. Indeed, they are the natural Dictates of common Sense, unsophisticated with false Philosophy. In every subsequent Debate therefore, wherein his Lordship’s Opinions are concerned, we may safely build on this as an acknowledged and sure Foundation, “ that the Motives of Man to the
 “ Practice of Virtue, can only arise from a
 “ Sense of his *present*, or a Prospect of his
 “ *future Happiness*.”

SECTION VII.

NOW this Conclusion will carry us to SECT.
VII.
 another Question of a very interesting and
 abstruse Nature: That is, “ How far, and
 “ upon what Foundation, the uniform

‘ *Wit and Hum.* Part iii. § 3.

M 4

“ Practice

ESSAY II. "Practice of Virtue, is *really* and *clearly*
 "connected with the Happiness of every
 "Individual?" For so far, as we have seen,
 and no further, can every Individual be na-
 turally moved to the Practice of it.

THIS is evidently a Question of *Fact*:
 And as it relates to the *Happiness* of *Man*,
 can only be determined by appealing to his
Constitution. If *this* be indeed *uniform* and
invariable; that is, if every Individual hath
 the same Perceptions, Passions, and Desires;
 then indeed the Sources of Happiness must
 be *similar* and *unchangeable*. If, on the con-
 trary, different Men be differently consti-
 tuted; if they have *different* Perceptions,
 Passions, and Desires; then must the
 Sources of their Happiness be equally *va-*
rious.

It should seem therefore, that "while
 "Moralists have been enquiring into hu-
 "man Happiness, they have generally con-
 "sidered it, as arising from one *uniform* and
 "particular Source, instead of tracing it up
 "to those various Fountains whence it really
 "springs; which are indefinitely various,
 "combined, and indeterminable." And
 this seems to have been the most general
 Foundation of Error.

IF we speak with Precision, there are but SECT.
VII.
three Sources in Man, of Pleasure and Pain, Happiness and Misery: These are *Sense*, *Imagination*, and the *Passions*. Now the slightest Observation will convince us, that these are associated, separated, and combined in Man, with a Variety almost infinite. In some, the Pleasures and Pains of *Sense* predominate; Imagination is dull; the Passions inactive. In others, a more delicate Frame awakens all the Powers of Imagination; the Passions are refined; the Senses disregarded. A third Constitution is carried away by the Strength of Passion: The Calls of Sense are contemned; and Imagination becomes no more than the necessary Instrument of some further Gratification.

FROM overlooking this plain Fact, seems to have arisen the Discordance among Philosophers concerning the Happiness of Man. And while *each* hath attempted to exhibit one favourite Picture, as the *Paragon* or *Standard* of human Kind; they have *all* omitted some Ten thousand other Resemblances which actually subsist in Nature.

THUS, most of the *Epicurean* Sect, tho' not the Founder of it^d, have discarded Be-

^d Επικουρος ο Φιλοσοφος επι ταις, &c. *Epicurus*
nevolence

ESSAY
II.

nevolence and *Virtue* from their System of *private* Happiness. The modern Patronizers of this Scheme, Mr. HOBBS, Dr. MANDEVILLE, and several *French* Writers, after heaping up a Collection of sordid Instances, which prove the *sensual* Inclinations and *Selfishness* of Man, leap at once to their desired Conclusion, that the pretended public Affections are therefore no more than the same low Passions in Disguise. That *Benevolence* makes no Part of Man's Nature; that the human Kind are absolutely unconnected with each other in Point of Affection: And that every Individual *seeks* and *finds* his *private* Happiness in and *from himself alone*.

THE noble Writer, on the contrary, viewing the brighter Parts of human Nature, through the amiable Medium of the *Socratic* Philosophy; and fixing his Attention

Philosophus, in libro quem *Ratas* opiniones inscribit, vitam cum *Iustitia* conjunctam *perturbatione* vacare pronunciat; *injustam* vero *perturbatione* quamplurima refertam esse. Brevi dicto multæ veræ sententiæ, et ut summatim dicatur, id quod hominum improbitatem probe corrigere queat, complexus. *Injustitia* enim metropolis omnium malorum, non infime tantum conditionis hominibus, sed semel ut comprehendamus omnia, etiam gentibus, et civitatum populis et regibus, maximas producit calamitates. *Diodorus Sic. Eclog. l. 25.*

tion

tion on the *public Affections*, as the Instru-
ments both of public and private Happi-
ness; rejects the *Epicurean's* Pretences with
Disdain: And, fully conscious of the high
Claims and Energy of Virtue, affirms that
the *private Affections* are, by no means, a
Foundation for *private Happiness*: That,
on the contrary, we must universally pro-
mote the Welfare of others, if we would
effectually secure our own: And that in
every Case, "*Virtue is the Good, and Vice*
"*the Ill of every one*."

S E C T.
VII.

'Tis plain, no two Systems of Philosophy
can be more *discordant* than these; yet each
of them have obtained a Number of Parti-
zans in all Ages of the World. The Que-
stion relates to a *Fact*, and the Fact lies
open to the *personal Examination* of all
Mankind. Whence then can so strange an
Opposition of Sentiments arise?

THIS seems to have arisen, not from a
false, but a *partial* View and Examination
of the Subject. The *Stoic* Party dwell alto-
gether on the *social* or *public*, the *Epicurean*
no less on the *private* or *selfish* Affections:
On these respectively they declaim; so that
according to the one, Mankind are naturally

* *Enquiry concerning Virtus*, passim.

a Race

ESSAY II. a Race of *Demi-Gods*; according to the other, a Crew of *Devils*. Both forgetting, what is unquestionably the Truth, that these *social* and *private* Affections are blended in an endless Variety of Degrees, and thus form an infinite Variety of Inclinations and of Characters. Many of the particular Facts, therefore, which these two Sects alledge, are true: But the *general* Consequence they draw from these *particular* Facts, is groundless and imaginary. Thus, 'tis true, that Mankind reap high Enjoyments from the Senses, Imagination, and Passions, without any regard to the public Affections: But the Consequence which the *Epicurean* would draw from hence, that “therefore the public Affections are never, “in any Case, a Source of private Happiness;” this is entirely void of Evidence: It supposeth Mankind to be *one uniform* Subject, while it is a Subject infinitely *various*; that every Individual has the same Feelings, Appetites, Fancies, and Affections, while, in Fact, they are mixed and combined in an endless Variety of Degrees. So, on the contrary, it must appear to every impartial Observer, that “the Exercise of the “public Affections is a Source of the highest
“Grati-

“ Gratification to many Individuals.” But ^{SECT.}
the *Stoic’s* Conclusion, that “ therefore the VII.
“ uniform Exercise of the public Affections,
“ in Preference to every other, is the only
“ Source of Happiness to every Individual;”
this is a Conclusion equally void of Evi-
dence. For, like its opposite Extreme, it
supposeth Mankind to be one uniform Sub-
ject, while, in Fact, it is a Subject indefi-
nitely various. It supposes that every Indi-
vidual has the same Feelings, Appetites,
Fancies, and Affections, while, in Reality,
they are mixed and combined in an endless
Variety of Degrees.

LET us now assign the most probable
Foundation, on which these *narrow* and
partial Systems have been so commonly
embraced. For, that two Theories so op-
posite, and so devoid of all rational Support,
should have made their Way in the World,
without some *permanent* Cause beyond the
Instability of mere *Chance*, seems hardly
credible.

It should seem therefore, that “ while
“ the Patronizers of these two Systems have
“ attempted to give a general Picture of the
“ human Species, they have all along taken
“ the Copy from themselves: And thus
“ their

ESSAY II. “their Philosophy, instead of being a true History of Nature, is no more than the History of their own *Imaginations* or *Affections*.”—This Truth may receive sufficient Confirmation from the Lives and Conduct of all the old Philosophers, from the *elegant* PLATO walking on his rich *Carpets*, to the *unbred* CYNIC snarling in his *Tub*. As every Man’s *Constitution* led him, so he adopted this or that Sect of *Philosophy*, and reasoned concerning *Fitness*, *Decency*, and *Good*. Read the Characters of CATO and CESAR, and you will clearly discover the true Foundation on which the one became a rigid *Stoic*, the other, a gross *Epicurean*. The first, yet a *Boy*, discovered such an *inflexible* Adherence to the Privileges of his Country, that he refused his Assent to what he thought a Violation of them, though threatened with immediate Death^f. The latter, yet unpractised in the Subtilties of Philosophy, and under the sole Dominion of natural Temper, discovered, at his first Appearance in the World, such Traits of *Art*, *Spirit*, and *Ambition*, that SYLLA declared, he saw something more formidable than MARIUS rising in him^g.

^f Plutarchi *Cato Utic.*^g Suetonii *Julius Cesar.*

To bring down the Observation to modern Times; 'tis evident, that the Patronizers of these two Systems inlist themselves according to the secret Suggestions of their several Passions. 'Tis well known, that the Writer of the *Fable of the Bees* was neither a *Saint* in his Life, nor a *Hermit* in his Diet: He seems to have been Master of a very considerable *Sagacity*, much Knowledge of the World, as it appears in populous *Cities*, extremely sensible to all the grosser *bodily* Enjoyments; but for *Delicacy* of Sentiment, Imagination, or Passion, for an exquisite *Taste* either in *Arts* or *Morals*, he appears to have been *incapable* of it.—The noble Writer is known to have been of a Frame the very Reverse of this: His *Constitution* was neither more nor less opposite to Dr. MANDEVILLE's, than his Philosophy. His sensual Appetites were weak; his Imagination all alive, noble, and capacious; his Passions were accordingly refined, and his public Affections (in *Fancy* at least) predominant. To these Instances, a moderate Share of *Sagacity* and Knowledge of the World may add others innumerable, in observing the Temper and Conduct of the Followers of these two Systems; who always

ESSAY
II.

ways take Party according to the Biass of their own Constitution. Among the *Epicureans* we ever find Men of high Health, florid Complexions, firm Nerves, and a Capacity for Pleasure: Of the *Stoic* Party are the delicate or sickly Frames, Men incapable of the grosser sensual Enjoyments, and who either *are*, or *think* themselves, *virtuous*. Now from these accumulated Proofs we may be convinced, that “ they who give
“ us these *uniform* Pictures of a Subject so
“ *various* as *Mankind*, cannot have drawn
“ them from *Nature*: That, on the contrary, they have copied them from their
“ own *Hearts* or *Imaginations*; and fondly
“ erected *themselves* into a general Standard
“ of the *human Species*.”

BUT although these Observations may afford sufficient Proof, that the *Stoic* and *Epicurean* Pictures of Mankind are equally partial; yet still it remains to be enquired how far, upon the whole, the human Kind in Reality leans towards the *one* or the *other*: That is, “ how far, and in what Degree,
“ the uniform Practice of Virtue constitutes
“ the Happiness of Individuals?” Now the only Method of determining this Question, will be to select some of the most striking
Features

Features of the human Heart: By this ^{SECT.}
Means we may *approach* towards a real VII.
Likeness, though from that infinite Variety
which subsists in Nature, the *Draught*
must ever be inadequate and *defective*.

To begin with the lowest Temperature
of the human Species; “there are great
“Numbers of Mankind, in whom the
“*Senses* are the chief Sources of Pleasure
“and Pain.” To the Harmony of Sounds,
the Beauty of Forms, the Decorum of
Actions, they are utterly insensible. They
are sagacious and learned in all the Grati-
fications of Sense; but if you talk to them
of the public Affections, of Generosity,
Kindness, Friendship, Good-will, you talk
in a Language they understand not. They
seem, in a Manner, unconnected with the
rest of their Kind; they view the Praises,
Censures, Enjoyments, and Sufferings of
others, with an Eye of perfect Indifference.
To Men thus formed, how can Virtue gain
Admittance? Do you appeal to their *Taste*
of Beauty? They have none. To their
acknowledged Perceptions of *Right* and
Wrong? These they measure by their pri-
vate *Interest*. To the Force of the public
Affections? They never felt them. Thus

N

every

ESSAY every Avenue is foreclosed, by which *Virtue*
 II. should enter.

THE next remarkable Peculiarity is, “where not the Senses, but *Imagination* is “the predominant Source of Pleasure.” Here the Taste always runs into the elegant Refinements of polite Arts and Acquirements; of Painting, Music, Architecture, Poetry, Sculpture: Or, in Defect of this truer Taste, on the false Delicacies of Dress, Furniture, and Equipage. Yet Experience tells us, that this Character is widely different from the virtuous one: That all the Powers of Imagination may subsist in their full Energy, while the *public Affections* and *moral Sense* are weak or utterly inactive. Nor can there be any necessary Connection between these different Feelings; because we see Numbers immersed in all the finer Pleasures of Imagination, who never once consider them as the Means of giving Pleasure to others, but merely as a *selfish* Gratification. This the noble Writer seems to have been aware of; and, not without great Address, endeavours to convert the Fact into a Proof of his main Theory, though, in Reality, it affords the strongest Evidence against him. “The *Venustum*, the *Honestum*, the
 “ *Decorum*

“ *Decorum* of Things, will force its Way, ^{SECT.}
 “ They, who refuse to give it Scope in the ^{VII.}
 “ nobler Subjects of a rational and moral
 “ Kind, will find its Prevalency elsewhere,
 “ in an inferior Order of Things—as either
 “ in the Study of common *Arts*, or in the
 “ Care and Culture of mere mechanic
 “ *Beauties*.—The *Spectre* still will *haunt* us,
 “ in *some Shape or other*; and when driven
 “ from our cool Thoughts, and frightened
 “ from the *Closet*, will meet us even at
 “ Court, and fill our Heads with Dreams of
 “ Grandeur, Titles, Honours, and a false
 “ Magnificence and Beauty^h.” All this is
 ingenious and plausible: And the very ele-
 gant Allusion, of “ the *Spectre* still haunt-
 “ ing us in *some Shape or other*,” seems at
 first View to imply, that even the most ob-
 stinate Endeavours to get rid of the Force
 of moral Beauty, are ineffectual and vain.
 But a nearer Examination will convince us,
 that the noble Writer applies here to *Elo-*
quence, rather than *Argument*; and puts us
 off with a *Metaphor* instead of a *Reason*.
 For the Pleasures of Imagination, whether
 they run in the Channel of polite Arts, Fur-
 niture, Planting, Building, or Equipage, are

^h *Wit, and Hum.* Part iv. § 2.

ESSAY II. indeed no *Spectres*, but independent *Realities* fairly existing in the Mind: They have no immediate or necessary Connexion with the Happiness of Mankind, which is often and *designedly* violated in order to gain the Possession of them. 'Tis true, the Pleasures of Imagination and Virtue are often *united* in the same Mind; but 'tis equally true, that they are often *separate*; that they who are most sensible to the *one*, are entire Strangers to the *other*; that one Man, to *purchase* a fine *Picture*, will *oppress* his Tenant; that another, to *relieve* his distressed Tenant, will *sell* his Statues or his Pictures. The Reason is evident: The one draws his chief Pleasure from *Imagination*; the other from *Affection* only. 'Tis clear therefore, that "where *Imagination* is naturally the pre-dominant Source of Pleasure," the Motives to Virtue must be very *partial* and *weak*, since the chief Happiness ariseth from a Source entirely distinct from the *benevolent Affections*.

ANOTHER, and very different Tempera-
ture of the Heart of Man is that "wherein
"neither Sense nor Imagination, but the
"PASSIONS are the chief Sources of Pleasure and Pain." This often forms the
best

best or the *worst* of Characters. As it runs ^{S E C T.}
either, First, Into the Extreme of Selfish-
ness, Jealousy, Pride, Hatred, Envy, and
Revenge; or, *2dly*, Into the amiable Af-
fections of Hope, Faith, Candour, Pity,
Generosity, and Good-will; or, *3dly*, Into
a various Mixture or Combination of these;
which is undoubtedly the most common
Temperature of human Kind.

Now to the first of these Tempers, how
can we affirm with Truth, that there is a
natural Motive to Virtue? On the contrary,
it should seem, that, if there be any Mo-
tive, it must be to *Vice*. For 'tis plain,
that from the Losses, Disappointments, and
Miseries of Mankind, such vile Tempers
draw their chief Felicity. The noble Wri-
ter indeed, in his Zeal for Virtue, considers
these black Passions as *unnatural*, and brands
them as a Source of *constant Misery*ⁱ. And
sure it would be matter of Joy to all good
Men, to find his Proofs convincing. But
if indeed this be not a true Representation
of the Case, I see not what Service can be
done to the Interests of *Virtue*, by *disguising*
Truth. 'Tis not the Part of a Philosopher
to write *Panegyrics*, but to *investigate* the

ⁱ Enquiry.

ESSAY

II.

real State of human Nature; and the only Way of doing this to any good Purpose, is to do it *impartially*: For with regard to human Nature, as well as Individuals, "Flattery is a Crime no less than Slander."

WHEN therefore the noble Writer calls these Affections *unnatural*, he doth not sufficiently explain himself. If indeed by their being *unnatural*, he means, that "they are such in their Degrees or Objects as to violate the public Happiness, which is the main Intention of Nature;" in this Sense, 'tis acknowledged, they are *unnatural*. But this Interpretation is foreign to the Question; because it affects not the *Individual*. But if, by their being *unnatural*, he would imply, that they are "a Source of constant Misery to the Agent;" this seems a Proposition not easy to be determined in the Affirmative.

FOR the main Proof which he brings in Support of this Assertion is, "that the Men of *gentlest Dispositions*, and *best of Tempers*, have at some time or other been sufficiently acquainted with those Disturbances, which, at ill Hours, even small Occasions are apt to raise. From these slender Experiences of Harshness and ill Humour,

“ Humour, they fully know and will confess the ill Moments which are passed, when the Temper is ever so little galled and fretted. How must it fare therefore with those, who hardly know any better Hours in Life; and who, for the greatest Part of it, are agitated by a thorow *active Spleen*, a close and settled Malignity and Rancour^k ?”

Now, this Instance is by no means sufficient to support the Affirmation. For 'tis plain, that in the Case of the “ Men of gentlest Dispositions, and best of Tempers, occasionally agitated by ill Humour,” there must be a strong Opposition and Discordance, a violent Conflict between the habitual Affections of Benevolence, and these accidental Eruptions of Spleen and Rancour which rise to obstruct their Course. A Warfare of this Kind must indeed be a State of complete Misery, when all is Uproar within, and the distracted Heart set at Variance with itself. But the Case is widely different, where “ a thorow active Spleen prevails, a close and *settled* Malignity and Rancour.” For in this Temper, there is no parallel Opposition of contending Pas-

^k *Enquiry*, Book ii. Part ii. § 3.

ESSAY
II.

fions: Nor therefore any similar Foundation for inward Disquiet and intense Misery. So much the noble Writer himself is obliged to own elsewhere. “Is there that fordid Creature on Earth, who does not prize his own Enjoyment?—Is not *Malice* and *Cruelty* of the *bigbest Relish* with some Natures¹?” Again, and still more fully to the Purpose: “Had we Sense, we should consider, ’tis in Reality the *thorow* Profligate, the very *complete unnatural Villain* alone, who can any way *bid* for *Happiness* with the honest Man. True Interest is wholly on the one Side or the other. All between is Inconsistency, Irresolution, Remorse, Vexation, and an Ague-fit^m.” Neither is this Acknowledgement peculiar to himself: “To be *consistent* either in Virtue or in Vice,” was the farthest that some of the most penetrating among the Ancients could carry the Point of *Morals*ⁿ. Thus where the *selfish* or *malevolent* Affections happen to prevail, there can be no internal *Motive to Virtue*.

ON the contrary, where the amiable Affections of Hope, Candour, Generosity, and

¹ *Moralists*, Part i. ^m *Wit and Hum.* Part iv. § 1.
ⁿ See Arrian. *Epiet.* lib. iii. c. 15.

Benevolence predominate, in this best and happiest of Tempers, Virtue hath indeed all the Force and Energy, which the noble Writer attributes to her Charms. For where the Calls of Sense are weak, the Imagination active and refined, the public Affections predominant; there the *moral Sense* must naturally reign with uncontrouled Authority; must produce all that Self-Satisfaction, that Conscioufness of merited Kindness and Esteem, in which, his Lordship affirms, the very Effence of our Motives to Virtue doth consist. This shall with Pleasure be acknowledged, nay asserted, as “the happiest of all Temperaments,” whenever it can be *found* or *acquired*. To a Mind thus formed, Virtue doth indeed bring an *immediate* and *ample Reward* of perfect Peace and sincere Happiness in all the common Situations of Life. It may therefore be with Truth affirmed, that a Temper thus framed must indeed be naturally and internally *moved* to the uniform Practice of Virtue.

THERE are, besides these, an endless Variety of Characters formed from the various Combinations of these essential *Ingredients*; which are not designed as a full
Expression

ESSAY II. *Expression* of all the Tempers of Mankind:

They are the Materials only, out of which these Characters are formed. They are no more than the several Species of *simple Colours* laid, as it were, upon the *Pallet*; which, variously *combined* and associated by the Hand of an experienced Master, would indeed call forth every striking *Resemblance*, every changeful Feature of the *Heart* of *Man*.

Now, among all this infinite Variety of Tempers which is found in Nature, we see there cannot be any uniform Motive to Virtue, save only “where the Senses are weak, “the Imagination refined, and the public “Affections strongly predominant.” For in every other Character, where either the Senses, gross Imagination, or selfish Passions prevail, a natural Opposition or Discordance must arise, and destroy the uniform Motive to Virtue, by throwing the Happiness of the Agent into a different Channel. How seldom this sublime Temper is to be found, is hard to say: But this may be affirmed with Truth, that every Man is not *really* possessed of it in the Conduct of Life, who *enjoys* it in *Imagination*, or *admires* it in his Closet, as it lies in the *Enquiry concerning Virtue*.

Virtue. A Character of this supreme Excellence must needs be *approved* by most: SECT.
VII.
And the *Heart* of Man being an unexhausted Fountain of *Self-Deceit*, what it *approves*, is forward to think itself possessed of. Thus a lively *Imagination* and unperceived *Self-Love*, fetter the Heart in certain *ideal* Bonds of their own creating: Till at length some turbulent and furious Passion arising in its Strength, breaks these fantastic Shackles which Fancy had imposed, and leaps to its Prey like a *Tyger* chained by *Cobwebs*.

SECTION VIII.

FROM these different Views of human Nature, let us now bring this Argument to a Conclusion. SECT.
VIII.

THE noble Writer's Scheme of Morals therefore, being grounded on a Supposition, which runs through the whole Course of his Argument, that "all Mankind are naturally capable of attaining a *Taste* or *Relish* for *Virtue*, sufficient for every Purpose of social Life," seems essentially defective. For, from the Enquiry already made into the real and various Constitution of Man, it appears, that a great Part of the
Species

ESSAY
II.

Species are naturally incapable of this *fancied* Excellence. That the various Mixture and Predominancy of *Sense*, *Imagination*, and *Passion*, give a different Cast and Complexion of Mind to every Individual: That the *Feeling* or *Prospect* of Happiness can only arise from this Combination: That consequently, where the benevolent Affections and moral Sense are weak, the selfish Passions and Perceptions headstrong, there can be no internal Motive to the *consistent* Practice of Virtue.

THE most plausible Pretence I could ever meet with, amidst all the Pomp of Declamation thrown out in Support of this *All-Sufficiency* of a *Taste* in Morals, is this: “ That although the Force and Energy of
“ this Taste for Virtue appears not in every
“ Individual, yet the Power lies dormant in
“ every human Breast; and needs only be
“ called forth by a *voluntary Self-Discipline*,
“ in order to be brought to its just Per-
“ fection. That the Improvement in our
“ Taste in Morals is parallel to the Progress
“ of the Mind in every other Art and Ex-
“ cellence, in *Painting*, *Music*, *Architecture*,
“ *Poetry*: In which, a *true* Taste, how-
“ ever *natural* to Man, is not born with
“ him,

“ him, but formed and brought forth to ^{SECT.}
 “ Action by a proper *Study* and *Applica-* VIII.
 “ *tion.*”

THE noble Writer hath innumerable Passages of this Kind: So many indeed, that it were Labour lost to transcribe them°. And one of his Followers hath affirmed in still more emphatical Expressions, if possible, than his Master, that “ the Height of “ *Virtuoso-ship* is VIRTUE^p.”

Now this State of the Case, though at first View it carries some Degree of Plausibility, yet, on a closer Examination, destroys the whole System. For if, as it certainly is, the *Capacity* for a Taste in *Morals*, be similar to a *Capacity* for a Taste in *Arts*; 'tis clear, that the most assiduous Culture or Self-Discipline can never make it even *general*, much less *universal*. One Man, we see, hath a Capacity or Genius for Painting, another for Music, a third for Architecture, a fourth for Poetry. Torture each of them as you please, you cannot infuse a Taste for any, but his own *congenial* Art. If you attempt to make the Poet an Architect, or the Painter a Musician, you may make a pre-

° *Charact.* passim.
Isimon, Let. vi.

^p *Letters of Hydaspes to Philimon*.

ESSAY
II.

tending *Pedant*, never an accomplished *Master*. 'Tis the same in Morals: Where the benevolent Affections are naturally strong, *there* is a *Capacity* for a high *Taste* in Virtue: Where these are *weak* or *wanting*, there is in the same Proportion, *little* or *no Capacity* for a *Taste* in Virtue. To harangue, therefore, on the superior Happiness attending the Exercise of the public Affections, is quite foreign to the Purpose. This superior Happiness is allowed, where the public Affections can be *found*, or *made*, predominant. But how can any Consequence be drawn from hence, so as to influence those who never felt the Impulse of public Affection? Are not the Pleasures of Poetry, Painting, Music, sublime, pure, and lasting, to those who *taste* them? Doth it therefore follow, that all Mankind, or any of them, can be harangued into a *Taste* and *Love* of these elegant Arts, while the very Capacity of receiving Pleasure from them is *wanting*? Thus in Morals, where a similar Incapacity takes Place through the natural Want of a lively Benevolence, no Progress can ever be made in the *Taste* or *Relish* for virtuous Enjoyment. Though therefore you should prove, as indeed one of Lord SHAFTES-

BURY's Followers hath done, "that Virtue
"is accommodate to all Places and Times,
"is *durable, self-derived, and indeprivable*,"
whence he concludes, it has the best Title
to the Character of the sovereign Good;
yet all the while, the main Point in Debate
is taken for granted, that is, "whether the
"Possession of it be any *Good* at all." Now
to those who receive no Increase of *internal*
Happiness from it, it cannot be a *Good*:
And where there is a natural *Defect* of be-
nevolent Affection, it can give no *internal*
Happiness: Consequently, though it have
all the other Characters of the *Summum*
Bonum, though it be *durable, self-derived,*
and *indeprivable*, it can never, by such, be
regarded as the *sovereign Good*.

'Tis pleasant enough to observe the Ar-
gumentation of the Writer last mentioned.
After describing "the fairest and most ami-
"able of Objects, the true and perfect Man,
"that Ornament of Humanity, that god-
"like Being, without Regard either to Plea-
"sure or Pain, uninfluenced either by Prof-
"perity or Adversity, superior to the World,
"and its best and worst Events"—He then
raiseth an Objection—"Does not this

¹ Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3^d. On Happiness.

"System

ESSAY
II.

“System border a little upon the Chimeri-
cal?”—On my Word, a shrewd Que-
stion, and well worth a good Answer; and
thus he clears it up.—“It seems to require,
“said I, a Perfection to which no Indivi-
“dual ever arrived. That very Transcen-
“dence, said he, is an Argument on its be-
“half. Were it of a Rank inferior, it
“would not be that Perfection which we
“seek. Would you have it, said I, beyond
“Nature? If you mean, replied he, beyond
“any particular or individual Nature, most
“undoubtedly I would^r.” ’Tis not there-
fore to be wondered at, that this Gentleman,
wrapped up in *Visions* of ideal Perfection,
should express “his Contempt of those su-
“perficial Censurers, who profess to refute
“what they want even Capacities to com-
“prehend^s.” Doubtless he means those
groveling Observers, who draw their Ideas
of Mankind “from particular or individual
“Natures,” and have not yet risen to “the
“*beatific Vision*^t of the perfect Man.”
Indeed, the Gentleman frankly owns, “that
“Practice too often *creeps*, where Theory

^r Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3^d. *On Happiness*,
p. 215.

^s Ibid. p. 108.

^t Ibid.

“ can

“can soar.” And this I take to be a true Account of the Matter. S E C T.
VIII.

THUS, as according to these Moralists, the *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue is similar to a Taste for Arts; so what is said of the Poet, the Painter, the Musician, may in this Regard with equal Truth be said of the Man of Virtue—*Nascitur, non fit*. Hence it is evident, that the noble Writer’s System, which supposeth all Men capable of this exalted Taste, is chimerical and groundless.

BUT even supposing all Men capable of this high Taste in Morals, there would arise an unanswerable Objection against the Efficacy of this refined Theory. Though it were allowed, that all Mankind have the same delicate Perception of *moral*, as some few have of *natural* Beauty, yet the Parallel would by no means hold, that “as the *Virtuoso* always pursues his Taste in Arts “*consistently*, so the Man of *Virtue* must be “equally *consistent* in *Action* and *Behaviour*.” For the *Virtuoso* being only engaged in mere *Speculation*, hath no opposite Affections to counteract his Taste: He meets with no Obstructions in his Admira-

“Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3^d. On Happiness, p. 108.

ESSAY
II.

tion of Beauty : His Enthusiasm takes its unbounded Flight, not retarded by any Impediments of a discordant Nature. But the Man of *Virtue* hath a different and more difficult Task to perform : He hath often a numerous Train of Passions, and these perhaps the most violent to oppose : He must labour through the surrounding Demands and Allurements of selfish Appetite : Must subdue the Sollicitations of every the most natural Affection, when it opposes the Dictates of a pure Benevolence. Hence even supposing the most refined Taste for Virtue common to all, it must ever be retarded in its Progress, often baffled and overthrown amidst the *Struggle* of contending *Passions*.

THIS seems to be a full and sufficient Reply to all that can be urged in Support of this fantastic System from a View of *human Nature*. But as the noble Writer hath attempted to confirm his Theory by some collateral Arguments of another Kind, it may be proper here to consider their real Weight.

HE urges, therefore, the Probability at least, if not the certain Truth of his Hypothesis from hence, " That it would be an
" Imputation on the Wisdom of the Deity
" to

“to suppose that he had formed Man so
 “imperfect, that the true Happiness of the
 “Individual should not always coincide
 “with that of the whole Kind^w.” And
 beyond Question, the Assertion is true: But
 the Consequence he draws from it, “that
 “therefore human Happiness must always
 “consist in the immediate Feeling of virtu-
 “ous Enjoyment,” is utterly groundless.
 This Inference seems to have been drawn
 from a View of the *Brute* Creation; in
 which we find, *Instincts* or *immediate Feel-*
ings are the only Motives to Action; and in
 which, we find too, that these immediate
 Propensities are *sufficient* for all the Pur-
 poses of their Being. In this Constitution
 of Things the Creator’s Wisdom is emi-
 nently displayed; because, through a Defect
 of *Reason* or *Reflexion*, no other Kind of
 Principle could possibly have taken Place.
 But the Conclusion drawn from thence,
 “that Man must have a similar Strength of
 “Instinct implanted in him, in order to di-
 “rect him to his supreme Happiness,”
 this is without Foundation: Because the
 Deity hath given him not only *present* Per-
 ceptions, but *Reason*, *Reflexion*, and a *Fore-*

SECT.
VIII.

^w Enquiry.

O 2

fight

ESSAY II. *sight of future Good and Evil, together with*
 a sufficient Power to obtain the one, and avoid the other. As therefore Man hath sufficient Notices of the *moral Government* of God, which will at length produce a perfect Coincidence between the *virtuous Conduct* and the *Happiness* of every Individual, it implies no essential Defect of Wisdom in the Creator, to suppose that he hath not given this *universal* and *unerring* Bias towards Virtue to the whole human Species. Man is enabled to pursue and obtain his proper Happiness by *Reason*; Brutes by *Instinct*.

AGAIN, the noble Writer often attempts to strengthen his Argument, by “representing the *external Good* which naturally flows from *Virtue*, and the *external Evils* which naturally attend on Vice*.” But sure this is rather deserting than confirming his *particular Theory*; which is, to prove that Happiness is *essential* to *Virtue*, and *inseparable* from it: “That Misery is *essential* to *Vice*, and inseparable from it.”—Now, in bringing his Proofs from Happiness or Misery of the *external Kind*, he clearly deserts his original Intention: Because these *Externals* are not *immediate*, but

* Enquiry, B. ii. P. i. § 3.

consequential; not certain, but contingent: SECT.
VIII.
They are precisely of the Nature of *Reward* and *Punishment*; and therefore can have no Part in the Question now before us; which relates solely to “ that Happiness or Misery “ arising from the inward State of the “ *Mind, Affections, and moral Sense*, on the “ Commission of Vice, or the Practice of “ *Virtue.*” And this hath been already considered at large.

HOWEVER, that nothing may be omitted which can even remotely affect the Truth; we may observe, in passing, that after all the laboured and *well-meant* Declamation on this Subject, 'tis much easier to prove, “ that “ *Vice* is the Parent of *external* Misery, than “ that *Virtue* is the Parent of *external* Happiness.” 'Tis plain, that no Man can be vicious in any considerable *Degree*, but he must suffer either in his *Health*, his *Fame*, or *Fortune*. Now the Generality of Moralists, after proving or illustrating this, have taken it for granted, as a certain Consequence, that the external Goods of Life are, by the Law of Contraries, in a similar Manner annexed to the Practice of Virtue. But in Reality the Proof can reach no further than to shew the happy Consequences of *Innocence*, which

ESSAY is a very different Thing from *Virtue*? for
 II. *Innocence* is only the *abstaining* from *Evil*; *Virtue*, the actual Production of *Good*. Now 'tis evident indeed, that by *abstaining* from *Evil* (that is, by *Innocence*) we *must* stand clear of the Miseries to which we expose ourselves by the *Commission* of it; And this is as far as the Argument will go. But if we rigorously examine the external Consequences of an *active* *Virtue*, in such a World as this; we shall find, it must be often maintained at the Expence both of *Health*, *Ease*, and *Fortune*; often the Loss of Friends, and Increase of Enemies; not to mention the unwearied Diligence of *Envy*, which is ever watchful and prepared to blast distinguished Merit. In the mean time, the *innocent* Man sits unmolested and tranquil; loves *Virtue*, and *praiseth* it; avoids the Miseries of *Vice*, and the Fatigue of *active* *Virtue*; offends no Man, and therefore is beloved by all; and for the rest, makes it up by fair *Words* and civil Deportment. " Thus *Innocence*, and not *Virtue*; *Ab-*
 " *stinence* from *Evil*, not the *Production* of
 " *Good*, is the furthest Point to which
 " Mankind in general can be carried, from
 " a Re-

“ a Regard to the *external* Consequences of ^{SECT.}
“ Action.” ^{VIII.}

BUT whenever Appearances grow too strong against the noble Writer's System, he takes Refuge in an—*apage Vulgus!*—As he had before allowed, that “ the Vulgar may swallow any sordid Jest or Buffoonry,” so here he frequently suggests, that among the same Ranks, “ any kind of sordid Pleasure will go down.” But “ as it must be a finer Kind of Wit that takes with the Men of Breeding,” so in Morals “ the *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue, is what naturally prevails in the higher Stages of Life: That the *liberal* and *polished* Part of Mankind are disposed to treat every other Principle of Action as groundless and *imaginary*: But that among these, the *Taste* in Morals, if properly cultivated, must needs be sufficient for all the Purposes of Virtue.”

IN reply to this, which is perhaps the weakest Pretence of all that the noble Writer hath alledged, we need only observe, that those who are born to *Honours*, *Power*, and *Fortune*, come into the World with the

^y See Misc. 3^d. c. 2. and many other detached Passages.

ESSAY same *various* Mixture and *Predominancy* of
 II. *Sense, Imagination, and Affections*, with the
 lowest Ranks of Mankind. So that if they
 really enjoy better Opportunities of being
 completely virtuous, these must arise not
 from their internal *Constitution*, but their
 external *Situation* in Life. Let us examine
 how far this may give a Bias either towards
 Vice or Virtue.

Now 'tis plain that, with regard to the
Senses or bodily *Appetites*, the Possession of
 Power and Fortune must be rather hurtful
 than favourable to Virtue. Wealth gives
 Opportunity of *Indulgence*, and Indulgence
 naturally *inflames*. Hence the Habits of
sensual Inclination must in general be stronger
 in the *Lord* than the *Peasant*: Therefore,
 as nothing tends so much to imbrute the
 Man, and sink every nobler Affection of the
 Mind, as a servile Attendance on sensual
 Pleasure; so in this Regard, the Possession
 of Power and Fortune is rather *dangerous*
 than favourable to Virtue.

THE same may be affirmed in respect to
 the *Passions* or *Affections*. Can any thing
 tend so much to render any Passion ungo-
 vernable, as to know that we *need not* go-
 vern it? That our Power, Riches, and Au-
 thority,

thority, raise us above Controul? That we can hate, oppress, revenge, with *Impunity*? Are not the *Great*, of all others, most obnoxious to *Flattery*? Does not this tend to produce and nourish an *overweening* Opinion of *themselves*, an unjust *Contempt* of *others*? And is not *true Virtue* more likely to be *lost* than improved, amidst all these surrounding Temptations?

SECT.
VIII.

THE *Imagination* indeed is often refined, and *Reason* improved, in the higher Ranks of Life, beyond the Reach of the *mere Vulgar*. But they are little acquainted with human Nature, who think that *Reason* and *Imagination*, among the Bulk of Mankind, are any thing more than the *Ministers* of the *ruling Appetites* and *Passions*: Especially where the Appetites and Passions are inflamed by the *early* and *habitual* Possession of Honours, Power, and Riches.

BUT still it will be urged, that the *Great* are under the Dominion of a powerful Principle, which is almost unknown among the *Vulgar*:—The Principle of HONOUR— which is a perfect *Balance* against all these surrounding Difficulties, and a full *Security* to *Virtue*.

WITH

ESSAY
II.

WITH regard to this *boasted* Principle, a very material Distinction must be made. By *Honour*, is sometimes meant “an Affection of Mind determining the Agent to the Practice of what is right, without any Dependance on other Mens Opinions.” Now this is but the *moral Sense*, under a new Appellation: It ariseth too, not from any particular *Situation* of Life, but from the natural *Constitution* of the Mind. Accordingly, it is not confined to any one Rank of Men, but is seen promiscuously among the *Great* and *Vulgar*. 'Tis therefore entirely beyond the present Question, which only relates to such Circumstances as are peculiar to *high Life*.

THE other, and more common Acceptation of the Word *Honour*, and in which alone it belongs peculiarly to the *Great*, is “an Affection of the Mind determining the Agent to such a Conduct, as may gain him the *Applause* or *Esteem* of those whose good Opinion he is fond of.” Now this Love of *Fame*, and Fear of *Disgrace*, though, as a *secondary* Motive to Action, it be often of the highest Consequence in Life; though it often *counterfeits*, sometimes even *rivals* Benevolence itself; yet as
a prin-

a *principal* Motive, there cannot be a more *precarious* Foundation of Virtue. For the *Effects* of this Principle will always depend on the *Opinions* of others: It will always take its particular Complexion from *these*, and must always *vary* with them. Thus 'tis a Matter of mere *Accident*, whether its Consequences be *good* or *bad*, *wholesome* or *pernicious*. If the *applauded Maxims* be founded in *Benevolence*, the Principle will so far lead to *Virtue*: If they be founded in *Pride*, *Folly*, or *Contempt*, the Principle will lead to *Vice*. And, without any designed Satire on the *Great*, it must be owned, the latter of these hath ever been the *predominant* Character of *Honour*. It were false indeed to affirm, that the Principle hath no Mixture of *benevolent* Intention; yet 'tis equally clear, that its *chief* Design is not so much to secure the *Happiness* of *all*, as to maintain the *Superiority* of a *few*: And hence this Principle hath ever led its Votaries to abhor the Commission, not so much of what is *unjust*, as of what is *contemptible*. Thus it is clear, that the Principle of *Honour*, as distinguished from *benevolent* Affection and the *moral Sense*, can never be a sufficient

ESSAY sufficient Foundation for the *uniform* Prac-
 II. tice of *Virtue*.

THESE are the main Arguments by which the noble Writer hath attempted to support this imagined *All-sufficiency* of the *Relish* or *Taste* in *Morals*. Had human Nature been indeed that *uniform* and *noble* Thing, which he seems to have *thought* it, he had surely been right in fixing the *Motives* to *Virtue*, on so generous and amiable a Principle. But as on Examination it appears, that he hath all along supposed this human Nature to be *what it is not*, his System is *visionary* and *groundless*; and his applauded Theory only fit to find a Place with the boasted Power of the great old *Geometer*, when he said—*δος πας ω, και τω γλω κινησω*².

MOST full indeed and clear to this Purpose are the Words of the noble Writer himself: Who, in his *miscellaneous* Capacity, and in a *merry* Mood, seems to have spoken more of Truth, than I believe he would care to stand to.—“ Such has been
 “ of late our dry Task. No wonder if it
 “ carries, indeed, a *meagre* and *raw* Ap-
 “ pearance. It may be looked on in Philo-

² Give me but a *Place* to set my Foot on, and I will move the whole Earth.

“ sophy,

“ sophy, as worse than a mere *Egyptian* SECT.
VIII.
 “ Imposition. For to make Brick without
 “ Straw or Stubble, is perhaps an easier
 “ Labour, than to prove Morals without a
 “ World, and establish a Conduct of Life,
 “ without the Supposition of any Thing
 “ living or extant besides our *immediate*
 “ *Fancy*, and World of *Imagination*^a.”

THESE Sallies might possibly have seemed difficult to account for, had not the noble Writer himself saved us the Labour of this Task. For he elsewhere tells us, that
 “ all sound *Love* and *Admiration* is ENTHU-
 “ SIASM: The Transports of Poets, Ora-
 “ rators, Musicians, Virtuosi; the Spirit of
 “ Travellers and Adventurers; Gallantry,
 “ War, Heroism; all, all Enthusiasm! 'Tis
 “ enough: I am content to be this new EN-
 “ THUSIAST^b.”—And thus in another Place he describes the Effects of this high Passion: That “ *Enthusiasm* is wonderfully powerful
 “ and extensive:—For when the Mind is
 “ *taken up in Vision*,—its Horror, Delight,
 “ Confusion, Fear, *Admiration*, or *whatever*
 “ *Passion* belongs to it, or is uppermost on
 “ this Occasion, will have something *vast*,
 “ *immane*, and, as Painters say, BEYOND

^a *Misc.* iv. c. 2.

^b *Moralists*, sub fin.

“ LIFE.

ESSAY "LIFE. And this is what gave Occasion
 II. "to the Name of *Fanaticism*, as it was used
 "by the Ancients in its original Sense, for
 "an APPARITION *transporting the MIND*."

SECTION IX.

SECT. HAVING sufficiently evinced the *flimzy*,
 IX. though curious, Contexture of these *Cobweb*
 Speculations *spun* in the *Closet*, let us now
 venture abroad into the World; let us pro-
 ceed to something applicable to Life and
 Manners; and consider what are the real
 Motives, by which Mankind may be sway'd
 to the *uniform* Practice of *Virtue*.

AND first, in Minds of a *gentle* and *gene-
 rous* Disposition, where the sensual Appetites
 are weak, the Imagination refined, and the
 benevolent Affections naturally predomi-
 nant; these very Affections, and the *moral*
Sense arising from them, will in all the com-
 mon Occurrences of Life secure the Prac-
 tice of Virtue. To these fine Tempers
 thus happily formed, the inward Satisfaction
 of a virtuous Conduct exceeds that of every
 outward Acquisition; and affords to its Pos-
 sessor a more true and lasting Happiness,

c Letter on Enthusiasm.

than

than Wealth, or Fame, or Power can bestow. SECT.
IX.

SECONDLY, Where the same Degrees of public Affection subsist, but stand opposed by sensual or selfish Passions of equal Violence, even here the Agent may rise to very high Degrees of Virtue, but not without the Aids of *Discipline* and *Culture*. Yet 'tis observable, that the Virtues of such a Temper are rather *conspicuous* than *consistent*: Without some strengthening Assistance, the Progress of the Mind towards Perfection is often broke by the Sallies of disordered Passion.

THERE is yet another Character, essentially different from these, but seldom distinguished, because generally taken for the *first*. Many esteem themselves, and are esteemed by others, as having arrived at the most *consummate Virtue*, whose Conduct never merits a higher Name than that of being *innocent*. This is generally the Case of those who love *Retreat* and *Contemplation*, of those whose Passions are naturally *weak*, or carefully *guarded* by what the World calls *Prudence*. Now, as in the last mentioned Character, a *Curb* from *Irregularity* was requisite, so here a *Spur* to *Action* is equally necessary

ESSAY necessary for the Support and Security of
 II. Virtue.

As we descend through more common and inferior Characters, the internal Motives to virtuous Actions grow less and less effectual. *Weak* or *no* Benevolence, a moral Sense proportionably *dull*, strong sensual *Appetites*, a clamorous Train of *selfish* Affections, these mixed and varied in endless Combinations, form the real Character of the *Bulk* of Mankind: Not only in *Cottages*, but in *Cities*, *Churches*, *Camps*, and *Courts*. So that some stronger Ties, some Motives more efficacious are necessary, not only for the Perfection of *Virtue*, but the Welfare, nay, the very Being of *Society*.

'Tis not denied, nay, 'tis meant and insisted on, that among all these various Characters and Tempers, the Culture of the benevolent Affections ought to be assiduously regarded. For though we have seen that the Design of introducing an universal high *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue be *visionary* and *vain*, yet still a lower, or a lower Degree may *possibly* be instilled. We have only attempted to prove, that the Capacity for this high Taste in Morals is not universally or essentially intervoven with the human
 Frame,

Frame, but dispensed in various Degrees, in ^{SECT.}
the same Manner as the Capacity for a Taste ^{IX.}
in *inferior* Beauties, in *Architecture*, *Painting*, *Poetry*, and *Music*.

To remedy this *Defect* of *unerring* Instinct in Man, by which he becomes a Creature so much less consistent than the Brute Kinds, Providence hath afforded him not only a Sense of *present*, but a Foresight of *future Good* and *Evil*.

HENCE the Force of human Laws; which being established by common Consent, for the Good of all, endeavour, so far as their Power can reach, by the Infliction of Punishment on Offenders, to establish the general Happiness of Society, by making the *acknowledged Interest* of every *Individual* to coincide and unite with the *public Welfare*.

BUT as human Laws cannot reach the *Heart* of Man; as they can only inflict *Punishment* on Offenders, but cannot bestow *Rewards* on the Obedient; as there are many Duties of *imperfect* Obligation which they cannot recognize; as *Force* will sometimes *defy*, and *Cunning* often *elude* their Power; so without some further Aids, some Motives to Action more *universally* interest-

P

ing,

ESSAY ing, Virtue must still be left betrayed and
II. deserted.

Now as it is clear from the Course of these Observations, that nothing can work this great Effect, but what can produce “an entire and universal Coincidence between private and public Happiness;” so is it equally evident, that nothing can effectually convince Mankind, that their own Happiness universally depends on *procuring*, or at least *not violating* the Happiness of others, save only “the lively and active Belief of an all-seeing and all-powerful God, who will hereafter make them happy or miserable, according as they designedly promote or violate the Happiness of their Fellow-Creatures.” And this is the *Essence* of RELIGION.

THIS, at first View, should seem a Motive or *Principle* of Action, sufficient for all the Purposes of Happiness and Virtue. Indeed the Bulk of Mankind seem agreed in this Truth. Yet refining Tempers, who love to quit the common Tracks of Opinion, have been bold enough to call even this in Question. Among these, the noble Writer hath been one of the most diligent:
 It

It will therefore be necessary to consider the ^{SECT.}
Weight of his Objections. ^{IX.}

To prevent Misinterpretation, it may be proper to observe, that Lord SHAFTESBURY sometimes talks in earnest of the *Nobleness* and *Dignity* of *Religion*. But when he explains himself, it appears, he confines his Idea of it to that Part which consists solely in Gratitude to, and Adoration of the supreme Being, without any Prospect of future Happiness or Misery. Now, though indeed this be the noblest Part, yet it is beyond the Reach of all, save only those who are capable of the most *exalted* Degrees of Virtue. His Theory of *Religion* therefore is precisely of a Piece, with his Theory of the *moral Sense*; not calculated for Use, but Admiration; and only existing in the Place where they had their Birth; that is, as the noble Writer well expresseth it, in a *Mind taken up in Vision*.

He sometimes talks, or seems to talk, in earnest too, on the *Usefulness* of *Religion*, in the common Acceptation of the Word. With Regard to which 'tis only necessary to observe, that whatever he hath said on this Subject I readily assent to: But this is no Reason why it may not be necessary to ob-

ESSAY
II.

violate every thing he hath thrown out to the contrary, to prejudice common Readers against Religion, through the Vanity of being thought *Original*. To *invent* what is *just* or *useful*, is the Character of *Genius*: 'Tis a far *different* thing, to broach *Ab-surdities*.

FIRST, therefore, he often asserts, that
 “ the Hope of future Reward and Fear of
 “ future Punishment is utterly unworthy
 “ of the free Spirit of a Man, and only fit
 “ for those who are destitute of the very
 “ first Principles of common Honesty: He
 “ calls it *miserable, vile, mercenary*: And
 “ compares those who allow it any Weight,
 “ to *Monkies* under the Discipline of the
 “ Whip^d.”

IN Answer to these general Cavils (probably aimed chiefly at *Revelation*) which are only difficult to confute, as they are vague and fugitive, let it be observed, first; that whatever can be objected against *religious* Fear, holds good against the Fear of *human* Laws. They *both* threaten the Delinquent with the Infliction of Punishment, nor is the Fear of the one more unworthy, than of the other. Yet the noble Writer

^d *Wit and Humour—Enquiry—&c.*

himself often speaks with the highest Respect of *Legislators*, of the Founders of *Society* and *Empire*, who, by the Establishment of wise and wholesome Laws, drew Mankind from their State of natural Barbarity, to that of cultivated Life and social Happiness: Unless indeed he supposes that ORPHEUS and the rest of them did their Business *literally* by *Taste* and a *Fiddle*. If therefore the just Fear of *human* Power might be enforced without insulting or violating the *Generosity* of our Nature, whence comes it, that a just Fear of the *Creator* should so miserably degrade the Species? The religious Principle holds forth the same Motive to Action, and only differs from the other, as the Evil it threatens is infinitely greater and more lasting.

FURTHER: If we consider the religious Principle in its true Light, there is nothing in it either *mean*, *slavish*, or *unworthy*. To be in a *Fright* indeed, to live under the Suggestions of *perpetual Terror* (in which, the noble Writer would persuade us, the religious Principle consists) is far from an amiable Condition. But this belongs only to the *Superstitious* or the *Guilty*. The first of these are *falsely* religious; and to the last, I

ESSAY II. imagine the noble Writer's most zealous Admirers will acknowledge, it *ought* to belong. But to the rest of Mankind, the *religious* Principle or *Fear* of God is of a quite different Nature. It only implies a lively and habitual Belief, that we shall be hereafter miserable, if we disobey his Laws. Thus every wise Man, nay, every Man of common Understanding, hath a *like Fear* of every *possible Evil*; of the destructive Power of natural Agents, of *Fire, Water, Serpents, Poison*: Yet none of these Fears, more than the religious one, imply a State of *perpetual* Misery and Apprehension: None of them are inconsistent with the most generous Temper of Mind, or truest Courage. None of them imply more than a *rational Sense* of these several Kinds of Evil; and from that Sense, a *Determination to avoid them*. Thus the noble Writer himself, when it answers a different Purpose, acknowledges that "a Man of Courage may be *cautious* without "real Fear". Now the Word *Caution*, in its very Nature, implies a Sense of a Possibility of Evil, and from that Sense a Determination to avoid it: Which is the very

* *Enquiry*, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

Effence of the religious Principle or the SECT
Fear of God. IX.

AND as to the other Branch of religious Principle, “ the Hope and Prospect of “ higher Degrees of future Happiness and “ Perfection:” — What is there of *mean*, *slavish*, or *unworthy* in it? Are all Mankind to be blown up into the *Mock-majesty* of the *kingly* STOIC, seated on the Throne of *Arrogance*, and *lording* it in an *empty* Region of CHIMÆRA’S? Is not the Prospect of Happiness the great universal Hinge of human Action? Do not all the Powers of the Soul centre in this one Point? Doth not the noble Writer himself elsewhere acknowledge this^f? And that our Obligations to Virtue itself can only arise from this one Principle, that it gives us real Happiness? Why then should the Hope of a happy Immortality be branded as *base* and *slavish*, while the Consciousness or Prospect of a happy Life on Earth is regarded as a just and honourable Motive?

THE noble Writer indeed confesseth, that “ if by the Hope of Reward, be understood “ the Love and Desire (he ought to have “ said, the *Hope*) of *virtuous Enjoyment*, it

^f See above, Sect. VI. of this *Essay*.

ESSAY II. “not derogatory to Virtue.” But that in every other Sense, the indulged Hope of Reward is not only mean and mercenary, but even *hurtful* to Virtue and common *Humanity*: “For in this religious Sort of Discipline, the Principle of *Self-Love*, which “is *naturally so prevailing* in us (*indeed?*) “being no way moderated or restrained, “but rather improved and made stronger “every Day, by the Exercise of the Passions in a Subject of more extended Self-Interest; there may be reason to apprehend lest the Temper of this kind should “extend itself in general through all the “Parts of Life.”

THIS, to say the best of it, is the very *Phrenzy* of Virtue. Religion proposeth true Happiness as the End and Consequence of virtuous Action: This is granted. It proposeth it by such Motives as must influence Self-Love, and consequently hath given the best Means of procuring it. Yet, it seems, Self-Love being not restrained, but made stronger, will make Mankind miss of true Happiness. That is, by leading Self-Love into the Path of *true* Happiness, Religion will inevitably conduct it to *false*; by commanding us to *cherish* our *public* Affections,

fections, it will certainly *inflame* the *private* ones; by assuring us, that if we would be happy hereafter, we must be *virtuous* and *benevolent*, it will beyond Question render us *vile* and *void* of *Benevolence*. But this Mode of Reasoning is common with the noble Writer.

HOWEVER, at other Times his Lordship can descend to the Level of common Sense; and prosecute his Argument by Proofs diametrically opposite to what he here advanceth. For in displaying the Motives to Virtue, after having modelled the inward State of the human Mind according to his own Imagination, he proceeds to consider the *Passions* which regard *ourselves*, and draws another, and indeed a stronger Proof from *these*.—He there proves ^s the Folly of a vicious Love of Life, “because Life itself “may often prove a Misfortune.” So of *Cowardice*, “because it often robs us of “the Means of Safety.” — Excessive *Resentment*, “because the Gratification is no “more than an Alleviation of a racking “Pain.”—The Vice of *Luxury* “creates “a Nauseating, and Disgust, Diseases, and “constant Craving.” He urges the same

^s Enquiry, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

ESSAY
II.

Objections against intemperate Pleasure of the amorous kind. He observes that Ambition is ever "suspicious, jealous, captious, "and incapable of bearing the least Dis- "appointment." He then proceeds thro' a Variety of other Passions, proving them all to be the Sources of some internal or external Misery. Thus he awakens the same Passions of *Hope* and *Fear*, which, in a religious View, he so bitterly inveighs against. Thus he exhibits a Picture of future *Rewards* and *Punishments*, even of the most *selfish* Kind: He recommends the Conformity to Virtue, on the Score both of present and future *Advantage*: He *deters* his Reader from the Commission of Vice, by representing the Misery it will produce. And these too, such *Advantages* and such *Miseries*, as are entirely distinct from the mere Feeling of virtuous Affection or its contrary: From the Considerations of Safety, Alleviation of *bodily* Pain, the Avoidance of *Distaste*, and *Diseases*. Now doth not his own Cavil here recoil upon him? "That in this Sort of Discipline, and by "exhibiting such Motives as these, the Principle of Self-Love must be made stronger, "by the Exercise of the Passions in a Sub-
ject

“ ject of more extended Self-Interest: And S E C T.
IX.
 “ so there may be Reason to apprehend, lest
 “ the Temper of this Kind should extend
 “ itself in general through all the Parts of
 “ Life.” Thus the Objection proves equally
 against both; In Reality, against neither.
 For, as we have seen, the *Sense*, or *Pro-
 spect* of Happiness, is the only possible
 Motive to Action; and if we are taught to
 believe that *virtuous Affection* will produce
Happiness, whether the expected Happiness
 lies in *this* Life, or *another*, it will *tend*, and
equally tend, to produce *virtuous Affection*.
 The noble Writer, therefore, and his Ad-
 mirers, might as well attempt to remove
 Mountains, as to prove that the *Hope* and
 Prospect of a happy Immortality, can justly
 be accounted more servile, mercenary, or
hurtful, than the View of those transient and
 earthly Advantages, which his Lordship
 hath so rhetorically and honestly display'd,
 for the Interest and Security of *Virtue*. In
 Truth, they are precisely of the same Na-
 ture, and only differ in Time, Duration, and
 Degree. They are both established by our
 Creator for the same great End of Happi-
 ness. And what GOD hath thus *connected*,
 it

ESSAY II. it were *absurd*, as well as *impious*, to attempt to separate ^h.

THERE is yet another Circumstance observable in human Nature, which still further proves, that the Hope of a happy Immortality hath no Tendency to produce selfish Affection, but its contrary. For let the *stoical* Tribe draw what Pictures they please of the human Species, this is an undoubted Truth, “ that *Hope* is the most universal Source of human *Happiness* : And

^h Hence we may see the Weakness and Mistake of those *falsely religious*, who fall into an *Extreme* directly *opposite* to this of the noble Writer ; who are *scandalized* at our being determined to the Pursuit of Virtue through any Degree of Regard to its happy Consequences in this Life ; which Regard they call *worldly, carnal, profane*. For it is evident, that the religious Motive is precisely of the same Kind ; only *stronger*, as the Happiness expected is *greater* and more *lasting*. While therefore we set the *proper* and *proportioned* Value upon each, it is impossible we can act irrationally, or offend that God who established *both*.

This naturally leads to a further Observation, which shews the Danger, as well as Folly, of *groveling* in *Systems*. Virtue, we see, comes recommended and enforced on three Principles. It is attended with *natural* and immediate *Pleasure* or Advantage :—It is commanded by human *Laws* :—It is enjoined by *Religion*.—Yet the *Religionists* have often decry’d the first of these Sanctions : The *fanatical Moralists*, the *last* : And even the *second* hath not escaped the Madness of an *enthusiastic* Party ; which, however, never grew considerable enough in this Kingdom, to merit Confutation.

“ that

“ that Man is never so sincerely and heartily ^{S E C T.}
“ *benevolent*, as when he is truly *happy* in ^{IX.}
“ himself.” Thus the high Consciousness

of his being numbered among the Children of God, and that his Lot is among the Saints; that he is destined to an endless Progression of Happiness, and to rise from high to higher Degrees of Perfection, must needs inspire him with that Tranquillity and Joy, which will naturally diffuse itself in Acts of sincere Benevolence to all his Fellow-Creatures, whom he looks upon as his Companions in this Race of Glory. Thus will every noble Passion of the Soul be awakened into Action: While the joyless Infidel, possessed with the gloomy Dread of Annihilation, too naturally contracts his Affections as his Hopes of Happiness decrease; while he considers and despiseth himself, and his Fellow-Creatures, as no more than the Beasts that perish.

THE noble Writer indeed insinuates, that there is “ a certain Narrowness of Spirit, “ occasioned by this Regard to a future “ Life, peculiarly observable in the *devout* “ Persons and *Zealots* of almost every religious Persuasionⁱ.” In reply to which,

ⁱ *Enquiry*, B. i. Part iii. § 3.

ESSAY 'tis only necessary to affirm, what may be
 II. affirmed with Truth, that with Regard to
dévout Persons the Insinuation is a *Falsehood*.
 It was prudently done indeed, to join the
Zealots (or *Bigots*) in the same Sentence;
 because it is true, that *these*, being under the
 Dominion of *Superstition*, forget the true
 Nature and End of *Religion*; and are there-
 fore scrupulously exact in the Observation
 of outward *Ceremonies*, while they neglect
 the superior and *essential* Matters of the Law,
 of *Justice*, *Benevolence*, and *Mercy*.

AND as to the Notion of confining the
 Hope of future Reward to "that of virtu-
 "ous Enjoyment only:" This is a *Refine-
 ment* parallel to the rest of the noble Wri-
 ter's System; and, like all Refinements,
 contracts instead of enlarging our Views.
 'Tis allowed indeed, that the Pleasures of
 Virtue are the highest we know of in our
 present State; and 'tis therefore commonly
 supposed, they may constitute our chief Fe-
 licity in another. But doth it hence follow,
 that no other Sources of Happiness may be
 dispensed, which as yet are utterly unknown
 to us? Can our narrow and partial Imagi-
 nations set Bounds to the Omnipotence of
 GOD? And may not our Creator vouchsafe

us such Springs of yet untasted Bliss, as shall ^{SECT.}
exceed even the known Joys of Virtue, as ^{IX.}
far as *these* exceed the Gratifications of
Sense? Nay, if we consider, what is gene-
rally believed, that our Happiness will arise
from an Addition of new and higher Facul-
ties; that in the present Life, the Exercise
of Virtue itself ariseth often from the *Imper-*
fection of our State; if we consider these
Things, it should seem highly probable, that
our future Happiness will consist in some-
thing quite beyond our present Compre-
hension: Will be “such as Eye hath not
“seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it en-
“tered into the Heart of Man to conceive.”

SECTION X.

BUT beyond these Objections, the no- ^{SECT.}
ble Writer hath more than once touched ^{X.}
upon another, which merits a particular
Consideration. For he affirms, that “after
“all, ’tis not merely what we call *Princi-*
“*ple*, but a *Taste*, which governs Men.”
That “even Conscience, such as is owing
“to religious Discipline, will make but a
“slight Figure, where this Taste is set
“amiss^k.”

^k *Misc.* iii. c. 2.

ESSAY
II.

THE Notion here advanced is not peculiar to himself. He seems to have drawn it from a much more considerable Writer, who hath endeavoured to support the same Proposition by a great Variety of Examples¹. Several Authors of inferior Rank have borrowed the same Topic, for popular Declamation. Nay, one hath gone so far as to assert, "that Man is so unaccountable a Creature, as to act most commonly against his Principle^m."

THE Objection, indeed, carries an Appearance of Force: Yet on a near Examination it entirely vanisheth.

IT must be owned, that in most Countries, a considerable Part of what is called *Religion*, deserves no other Name than that of *Absurdity* made *sacred*. And it were strange indeed, should *Bigotry* and *false Religion* produce that Uprightness of Heart, that Perfection of Morals, which is the genuine Effect of *Truth*.

IT must be owned, that with Regard to religious Principle, as well as moral Practice, every Man has the Power of being a *Hypocrite*. That Knaves, in order to be

¹ BAYLE, *Pensf. sur une Comete.*

^m *Fable of the*

accounted

accounted *honest*, may appear *devout*. And ^{SECT.}
we may reasonably suppose, if we consider X.
the innumerable Artifices of Villainy, that
the outward Profession of Religion becomes
a frequent *Disguise* to an *atheistical* and *cor-*
rupted Heart.

BUT though these Circumstances may
sufficiently account for the Appearance in
many particular Cases, yet, with Regard to
the *general Fact*, *here* seems to lie the pro-
per Solution of the Difficulty. “ That even
“ where true Religion is known, professed,
“ and in Speculation *assented* to, it is seldom
“ so thoroughly *inculcated* as to become a
“ Principle of Action.” We have seen
that Imagination is the universal Instrument
of human Action; that no Passion can be
strongly excited in the Soul by mere Know-
ledge or Assent, till the Imagination hath
formed to itself some kind of Picture or
Representation of the Good or Evil appre-
hendedⁿ. Now the Senses and their attend-
ant Passions are continually urging their
Demands, through the immediate Presence
of their respective Objects: So that nothing
but the *vivid Image* of some greater Good
or Evil in Futurity can possibly resist and

ⁿ See above, *Essay* I. § 3.

Q

over-

ESSAY

II.

overbalance their Sollicitations. The *Idea* therefore of future Happiness and Misery must be strongly impressed on the Imagination, ere they can work their full Effects, because they are *distant* and *unseen*: But this *Habit of Reflexion* is seldom properly fixed by *Education*; and thus for want of a proper Impression, “religious Principle is seldom gained, and therefore seldom operates.”

BUT where a sincere and lively Impression takes place; where the Mind is convinced of the Being of a GOD; that he *is*, and is a *Rewarder* of them that diligently seek him; where the *Imagination* hath gained a Habit of connecting this great Truth with every Thought, Word, and Action; there it may be justly affirmed, that Piety and Virtue cannot but *prevail*. To say, in a Case of this Nature, that Man will not act according to his Principle, is to contradict the full Evidence of known Facts. We see how true Mankind commonly are to their Principle of *Pride*, or mistaken Honour; how true to their Principle of *Avarice*, or mistaken Interest; how true to their Principle of a Regard to *human* Laws. Why are they so? Because they have strongly and habitually

ually connected these Principles in their S E C T.
X.
Imagination with the Idea of their own
Happinefs. Therefore, whenever the reli-
gious Principle becomes in the fame Man-
ner habitually connected in the Imagination,
with the Agent's Happinefs; that is, when-
ever the religious Principle takes Place at
all, it must needs become infinitely more
powerful than any other; because the *Good*
it promifeth, and the *Evil* it threatens, are
infinitely greater and more lafting. Hence
it appears, that the Corruption of Mankind,
even where the pureft Religion is *professed*,
and in Theory *affented* to, doth not arife
from the *Weaknefs* of religious Principle,
but the *Want* of it.

AND indeed on other Occafions, and to
ferve different Purpofes, the noble Writer
and his Partizans can allow and give Exam-
ples of all that is here contended for. No-
thing is fo common among thefe Gentle-
men, as to declaim againft the terrible Ef-
fects of *priestly Power*. 'Tis their favourite
Topic, to represent Mankind as groaning
under the Tyranny of the *faced Order*.
Now what does this Representation imply,
but “ the Force of religious Principle im-
“ properly directed?” If Mankind can be

ESSAY II. swayed by religious Hope and Fear, to resign their Passions and Interests to the *Artifice*, or Advantage of the *Priest*, why not to the *Benefit* of *Mankind*? 'Tis only impressing a different Idea of *Duty*: The Motive to Action is in both Cases the same, and consequently must be of equal Efficacy. Thus if religious Principle were void of *Force*, the Priesthood must be void of *Power*. The Influence therefore of the Priesthood, however dishonestly applied, is a Demonstration of the Force of *religious Principle*.

THIS therefore seems to be the Truth. Although, by timely and continued Culture, the religious Principle might be made more universally predominant; yet even as it is, though not so thoroughly inculcated as to become generally a consistent Principle of Action; in Fact it hath a frequent and *considerable*, though *partial* and imperfect Influence. None but the thoroughly Good and Bad act on continued or consistent Principles; all the intermediate Degrees of Good and Bad act at different Times on various and inconsistent Principles; that is, their *Imaginations* are by turns given up to *Impressions* of a *different*, or

even *contrary* Nature. This explains the whole Mystery: For, hence it appears that the consistent or inconsistent Conduct of Men depends not on the Nature of their Principles, but on having their Principles, whatever they are, *counteracted* by opposite ones. Although therefore, through a Failure of timely Discipline, Numbers of Men appear to be of that capricious Temper as not to be steady to any Principle, yet still the religious one will *mix* with the rest, and naturally *prevail* in its *Turn*. This is certainly a common Circumstance among the *looser* and more *inconsiderate* Ranks of Men; who, although by no Means uniformly swayed by the Precepts of Religion, are yet frequently struck with Horror at the Thought of Actions *peculiarly* vile, and deterred by the Apprehension of an all-seeing God from the Commission of Crimes *uncommonly atrocious*.

HERE then lies the essential Difference between the Efficacy of *Taste*, and *religious* Principle: That the first, being a Feeling or Perception dispensed in various Degrees, and in very weak ones to the Bulk of Mankind, is incapable, even through the most assiduous Culture, of becoming an universal

ESSAY or consistent Motive to Virtue: But the religious Principle, arising from such Passions as are common to the whole Species, must, if properly inculcated, *universally* prevail.

II.

'Tis evident therefore, that in the very first Dawns of Reason, religious Principles ought to be impressed on the Minds of Children; and this early Culture continued through the succeeding Stages of Life. But as the noble Writer hath strangely attempted to ridicule and dishonour Religion in every Shape; so here, he hath endeavoured to throw an Odium on this Method of religious Discipline, by representing it as the Enemy to true Morals and practical Philosophy, as it fetters the Mind with early Prejudices. “ Whatever Manner in Philosophy happens to bear the least Resemblance to that of *Catechism*, cannot, I am persuaded, of itself seem very inviting. “ Such a smart Way of questioning ourselves in our Youth, has made our Mankind more averse to the *expostulatory* Discipline: And though the metaphysical Points of our Belief, are by this Method with admirable Care and Caution instilled into tender Minds; yet the Manner of this *anticipated* Philosophy may make “ the

“ the After-work of Reason, and the in-
 “ ward Exercise of the Mind at a riper
 “ Age, proceed the more heavily, and with
 “ greater Reluctance. — ’Tis hard, after
 “ having by so many pertinent Interroga-
 “ tories and decisive Sentences, declared
 “ *who* and *what* we are ; to come leisurely
 “ in another, to enquire concerning our *real*
 “ *Self* and *End*, the Judgment we are to
 “ make of *Interest*, and the Opinion we
 “ should have of *Advantage* and *Good* :
 “ Which is what must necessarily determine
 “ us in our *Conduct*, and prove the leading
 “ Principle of our Lives°.”

IN reply to this *most philosophical* Para-
 graph, let it be observed ; that it is not the
 Design of Religion to make *Sophists*, but
good Subjects of Mankind. That Man be-
 ing designed, not for *Speculation*, but *Action*,
 religious Principle is not to be instilled in a
philosophical, but a *moral* View : Therefore
 with Regard to *Præctice*, nothing can be
 more fit and rational than to impress ac-
 knowledged *Truths* at an Age when the *Re-*
cipient is incapable of their *Demonstrations* ;
 in the same Manner as we teach the Me-

° Advice, &c. Part iii. § 2.

ESSAY II. *chanic to work on Geometric Principles,*
 while the Proofs are *unknown* to him.

BUT then, the *Prejudices of Education*—yes, these are the great *Stumbling-block* to a modern *Free-thinker*: It still runs in his Head, that all Mankind are born to dispute *de omni scibili* ^p. Let therefore this *minute* Philosopher reflect, first, that a *Prejudice* doth not imply, as is generally supposed, the *Falseness* of the Opinion instilled; but only that it is taken up and held without its proper *Evidence*. Thus a Child may be prejudiced in Favour of Truth, as well as Falseness; and in him neither the one nor the other can properly be called more than an *Opinion*. Further: The human Mind cannot remain in a State of *Indifference*, with regard either to *Opinion* or *Practice*: 'Tis of an *active* Nature; and, like a *fertile* Field, if by due Cultivation it be not made to produce good *Fruit*, will certainly spring up in *Tares* and *Thistles*. Impressions, Opinions, *Prejudices*, of one kind or other a Child will inevitably contract, from the Things and Persons that *surround* him: And if rational Habits and Opinions be not infused, in order to *anticipate* Absurdities;

^p On all Subjects.

Absur-

Absurdities will rise, and *anticipate* all rational Habits and Opinions. His *Reason* and his *Passions* will put themselves in *Action*, however untoward and inconsistent, in the same Manner as his *Limbs* will make an Effort towards progressive *Motion*, however awkward and absurd. The same Objection therefore that lies against instilling a *salutary Opinion*, will arise against *teaching* him to walk *erect*: For this, too, is a kind of “*anticipating Philosophy*.” And sure, a Child left to his own *Self-Discipline*, “till he could come *leisurely* to enquire concerning his *real Self* and *End*,” would stand as fair a Chance to *grovel* in Absurdity, and bring *down* his Reason to the sordid *Level* of Appetite, as to *crawl* upon all *four*, and dabble in the *Dirt*. Thus the noble Writer’s Ridicule would sweep away the whole System of Education along with the religious Principle: Not an Opinion or Inclination must be controuled, or so much as controverted; “left by this *anticipating Philosophy*, the Work of Reason, and the inward Exercise of the Mind, at a *riper Age*, should proceed the more heavily, “and with greater Reluctance.” The Caprice of Infancy must rule us, till the very
Capacity

ESSAY
II.

Capacity of Improvement should be destroyed; and we must turn *Savages*, in order to be made perfect in the *sovereign Philosophy*!

'TIS no difficult Matter therefore to determine, whether a Child should be left to the Follies of his own *weak* Understanding and *nascent* Passions; be left to imbibe the Maxims of corrupt Times and Manners; Maxims which, setting aside all Regard to their speculative Truth or Falsehood, do lead to certain Misery; or, on the other hand, shall be happily conducted to embrace those religious Principles, which have had the Approbation of the best and wisest Men in every Age and Nation; and which are known and allowed to be the only Means of true Happiness to Individuals, Families, and States.

THIS therefore ought to be the early and principal Care of those who have the Tuition of Youth: And they will soon find the happy Effects of their Instruction. For as the Child's Understanding shall improve, what was at first instilled only as an *Opinion*, will by Degrees be embraced as *Truth*: Reason will then assume her just Empire; and the great, universal, religious Principle,
a rati-

a rational Obedience to the Will of GOD, SECT. X.
 will raise him to his utmost Capacity of _____
 moral Perfection; will be a wide and firm
 Foundation, on which the whole Fabric of
 Virtue may rise in its just Proportions; will
extend and *govern* his *Benevolence* and *moral*
Sense; will strengthen them, if weak; will
 confirm them, if strong; will supply their
 Want, if naturally defective: In fine, will
 direct all his *Passions* to their proper *Objects*
 and *Degrees*; and, as the great *Master-spring*
 of Action, at once *promote* and *regulate*
 every Movement of his *Heart*.

It must be owned, the noble Writer's
 Caution against this "anticipating Philo-
 sophy" hath of late been deeply imbibed.
 In Consequence of it, we have seen *religious*
Principle declaimed against, ridiculed, la-
 mented. The Effect of this hath been, an
 abandoned Degree of Villainy in one Class
 of Mankind; a lethargic Indifference to-
 wards Virtue or Vice in another; and in
 the third, which boast the Height of mo-
 dern Virtue, we seldom see more than the
 first natural Efforts, the mere *Buddings* of
 Benevolence and Honour, which are too
 generally blasted ere they can ripen in-
 to *Action*. This Contempt of Religion
 hath

ESSAY hath always been a fatal Omen to free States.

II.

Nor, if we may credit Experience, can we entertain any just Hope, that this fantastic Scheme, this boasted *Relish* for Beauty and Virtue, can ever give Security to Empire, without the more solid Supports of religious Belief. For it is remarkable, that in the Decline of both the *Greek* and *Roman* States, after Religion had lost its Credit and Efficacy, this very *Taste*, this *sovereign Philosophy* usurped its Place, and became the common Study and Amusement (as it is now among ourselves) both of the *Vile* and *Vulgar*. The Fact, with Regard to *Greece*, is sufficiently notorious; with Regard to *Rome*, it may seem to demand a Proof. And who would think, that *QUINTILIAN* in the following Passage was not describing our own Age and Nation? “Nunc autem quae vel
“ut propria philosophiae afferuntur, passim
“tractamus omnes: Quis enim modo de
“JUSTO, AEQUO, ac BONO, non et VIR
“PESSIMUS loquitur?”—*What was formerly the Philosopher’s Province only, is now invaded by all: We find every wicked and worthless Fellow, in these Days, baranguing on VIRTUE, BEAUTY, and GOOD.*” What

⁹ Quint. Proœmium.

this

this *Leprosy* of false Knowledge may end in, ^{SECT.}
 I am unwilling to say: But this may be said X.
 with Truth, because it is justified by Experience; that along with the Circumstance now remarked, every other *Symptom* is rising among us, that hath generally attended the dark and troubled *Evening* of a *Commonwealth*.

DOUBTLESS, many will treat these Apprehensions with *Derision*: But this *Derision* is far from being an Evidence of their Falseness. For no People ever fell a Sacrifice to themselves, till lulled and infatuated by their own Passions. *Blind Security* is an essential Characteristic of a People devoted to Destruction. The Fact is equally undeniable, whether it ariseth from the moral Appointment of Providence, or the Connexion of natural Causes. Though this is seen and acknowledged by those who are conversant with the History of Mankind; yet 'tis hard to convey this Evidence to those who seldom extend their Views beyond their own short Period of Existence; because they see the Prevalence of the *Cause* assigned, while yet the pretended *Consequence* appears not. But they who look back into ancient Time are convinced, that the *public* Effects
 of

ESSAY II. of *Irreligion* have never been sudden or *immediate*. One Age is *falsely* polite, *irreligious*, and *vile*; the next is sunk in *Servitude* and *Wretchedness*. This is analogous to the Operation of other Causes. A Man may be intemperate for twenty Years, before he feels the Effects of Intemperance on his Constitution. The Sun and Moon raise the Tides; yet the Tides rise not to their Height, till a considerable Time after the Conjunction of these two Luminaries. We cannot therefore justly decide concerning the future *Effects* of Irreligion, from its present State. The *Examples* of former Times are a much better *Criterion*: And these are such, as ought to make every Man among us, that regards Posterity, tremble for his Posterity while he reads them.

FOR this is but too just an *Epitome* of the Story of Mankind. That TYRANNY and SUPERSTITION have ever gone Hand in Hand; mutually supporting and supported; taking their Progress, and fixing their Dominion over all the Kingdoms of the Earth; overwhelming it in one general Deluge, as the Waters cover the Sea. Here and there a happy Nation *emerges*; breathes for a while in the enlightened Region of KNOW-

LEDGE, RELIGION, VIRTUE, FREEDOM: SECT.
X.

'Till, in their appointed Time, IRRELIGION and LICENTIOUSNESS appear; *mine* the Foundations of the *Fabric*, and sink it in the general Abyſs of IGNORANCE and OPPRESSION.

POSSIBLY the fatal Blow may yet be averted from us. 'Tis ſurely the Duty of every Man, in every Station, to contribute his Share, however *inconfiderable*, to this great End. This muſt be my Apology for oppoſing the noble Writer's fantaſtic Syſtem; which by exhibiting a falſe Picture of human Nature, is, in Reality an *Inlet* to *Vice*, while it ſeems moſt *favourable* to *Virtue*: And while it pretends to be drawn from the *Depths* of *Philofophy*, is, of all others, *moſt unphilofophical*.

ESSAYS

ON THE

Characteristics, etc.

ESSAY III.

On Revealed RELIGION, and
CHRISTIANITY.

SECTION I.

IN the Course of the preceding *Essay*, SECT. I.
we have seen the noble Writer assum-
ing the Character of the professed *Dog-*
matist, the *Reasoner in Form*. In what re-
mains to be considered, concerning *Revealed*
Religion and CHRISTIANITY, we shall find
him chiefly affecting the *miscellaneous* Capa-
city ;

ESSAY
III.

city; the Way of *Chat*, *Raillery*, *Innuendo*, or *Story-telling*: In a word, that very Species of the present modish Composition, which he so contemptuously ridicules; "where, as he tells us, Justness and Accuracy of Thought are set aside as too constraining; where Grounds and Foundations are of no Moment; and which hath properly neither *Top* nor *Bottom*, *Beginning* nor *End*^a." In this, however, his Lordship is not quite so much to blame as might be imagined. In his Critical Progress, he had treated this *dishabille* of Composition, as the Man in the Fable did his Pears; unconscious he should be ever afterwards reduced to diet on them himself. The Truth of the Matter is, that the broken Hints, the ambiguous Expression, and the Ludicrous of the gentle Essayist, perfectly secure him from the rough Handling of the Logical-Disputer.

INDEED the noble Author has a double Advantage from this *Cloud*, in which the *Graces* so frequently secure their Favourite. He not only eludes the Force of every Argument the Defenders of Christianity alledge in it's Support, but even pleads the Privilege of

^aSee above, *Essay* i. § 2.

being

being ranked in the Number of *sincere* Christians. He takes frequent Occasions of expressing his Abhorrence of *idle Scepticks* and *wicked Unbelievers* in Religion : He declares himself of a more resigned Understanding, a ductile Faith, ready to be moulded into any Shape that his spiritual Superiors shall prescribe. At other Times, and in innumerable Places, he scatters such Insinuations against *Christianity*, and that too with all the Bitterness of *Sarcasm* and *Invective*, as must needs be more effectual in promoting *Irreligion*, than a formal and avowed Accusation. For in the Way of open War, there is fair Warning given to put Reason upon Guard, that no pretending Argument be suffered to pass without Examination. On the contrary, the noble Writer's concealed Method of *Raillery*, steals insensibly on his Reader ; fills him with endless Prejudice and Suspicion ; and, without passing thro' the *Judgment*, fixeth such Impressions on the Imagination, as *Reason*, with all its Effects, will be hardly able afterwards to efface.

THESE inconsistent Circumstances in his Lordship's Conduct, have made it a Question among some, what his real Sentiments were concerning Religion and *Christianity*.

ESSAY
III.

If it be necessary to decide this Question, we may observe, that a disguised Unbeliever may have his Reasons for making a formal Declaration of his Assent to the Religion of his Country: But it will be hard to find what should tempt a real *Christian* to load *Christianity* with Scorn and *Infamy*. Indeed, the noble Writer, to do him Justice, never designed to leave us at a Loss on this Subject. For he hath been so good, frequently to remind his Reader, to *look out* for the true Drift of his *Irony*, lest his real Meaning should be mistaken or disregarded.

HERE then lies the Force of his Lordship's Attack on *Christianity*; "In exciting Contempt by Ridicule." A Method which, as we have already seen^b, tho' devoid of all rational Foundation, is yet most powerful and efficacious in working upon vulgar Minds. Thus the Way of *Irony*, and false Encomium, which he so often employs against the blessed Founder of our Religion, serves him for all Weapons; the deeper he strikes the Wound, the better he shields himself.

WE are not therefore to be surprized, if we find the noble Writer frequently affecting a Mixture of *solemn Phrase* and *low*

^b *Essay* i. *passim*.

Buffoonry;

Buffoonry; not only in the same *Tract*, but SECT. I. in the same *Paragraph*. In this Respect, he resembles the facetious Drole I have somewhere heard of, who wore a *transparent Masque*: Which at a Distance, exhibited a Countenance wrap'd up in profound Solemnity; but those who came nearer, and could see to the Bottom, found the native Look distorted into all the ridiculous Grimace, which Spleen and Vanity could imprint.

SECTION II.

BUT as *natural Religion* is the only SECT. II. Foundation of *revealed*; it will be necessary, ere we proceed to the last, to obviate any Insinuations which the noble Writer may have thrown out against the Former.

As to the Expectation of future Happiness considered, as the natural Consequence of virtuous Action; his Lordship hath not, that I know of, either affirmed, or insinuated any thing against its Reasonableness. But with Regard to the other Branch of Religion, "the Belief of a future State of Misery or Punishment, considered as the appointed Consequence of Vice," this he

ESSAY
III. hath frequently endeavoured to discredit in such a Manner as would be no small Degree of Guilt to transcribe, were it not to shew at once the Impiety and Falseness of his Affirmations.

IN his Letter on *Enthusiasm*, he hath obliged us with several Passages of this Kind. These, it must be owned, are so obscure, that we must be content, to refer them rather to the Reader's equitable Construction, than urge them as direct Proofs.

THE Apprehension and *Fear* of something *supernatural*, so universal among Mankind, he seems all along to deride, as a visionary and *groundless Panic*^c. He adds that, "while some Sects, such as the *Pythagorean* and latter *Platonick*, joined in "with the Superstition and Enthusiasm of "the Times; the *Epicurean*, the *Academic* "and others, were allowed to use all the "Force of Wit and Raillery against it^d." To convince us how much he approves the Conduct of these libertine Sects, he boldly follows their Example. He assures us that "such is the Nature of the liberal, polished and refin'd Part of Mankind; so "far are they from the mere Simplicity of

^c *Lett. on Enthuf. passim.*

^d *Ib.*

"Babes

“Babes and Sucklings; that, instead of S E C T.
II.
 “applying the Notion of a future Reward
 “or Punishment, to their immediate Be-
 “haviour in Society; they are apt much
 “rather, thro’ the whole Course of their
 “Lives, to shew evidently, that they look
 “on the pious Narrations to be indeed no
 “better than Children’s Tales, and the
 “Amusement of the mere Vulgar^e.” He
 confirms these Opinions by assigning the
 Reason why Men of Sense should stand
 clear of the Fears of a Futurity: “God
 “is so good, as to exceed the very best of us
 “in Goodness: And after this Manner we
 “can have no Dread or Suspicion to render
 “us uneasy; for it is Malice only, and not
 “Goodness, which can make us afraid^f.”

Is this the *Philosopher* and *Patriot*, the
 Lover of his Country and Mankind! *This*
 the Admirer of ancient Wisdom, of venera-
 ble Sages, who founded “Laws, Constitu-
 “tions, civil and religious Rites, whatever
 “civilizes or polishes Mankind^g.”

*Tu Pater et Rerum inventor! Tu patria nobis
 Suppeditas præcepta!*

THIS, sure, is unhinging Society to the

^e *Mis.* iii. c. 2. ^f *Let. on Entbus.* ^g *Moralists*, P. i. § 3.

ESSAY utmost of his Power : For the Force of *re-*
 III. *ligious Sanctions* depends as much on their
 being believed, as the Force of *human Laws*
 depends on their being executed. To *de-*
stroy the *Belief* of the *one* therefore, is equi-
 valent to suspending the *other*.

BUT as the present Debate concerns not
 the *Utility*, but the *Truth* of *Religion*; 'tis
 chiefly incumbent on us, to shew, that the
 noble Writer's *Opinion* and *Reasoning*, on
 this Subject, are void of all Foundation.

'Tis observable therefore, First, that his
 Lordship, in other Places, allows that " If
 " there be naturally such a Passion as Enthu-
 " siasm, 'tis evident, that Religion itself is of
 " the Kind, and must be therefore natural to
 " Man^h." And in his *Letter on Enthusiasm*,
 even while he derides the Proneness of
 Mankind to the *conscientious Fear*, he adds,
 " that tho' *Epicurus* thought these Appre-
 " henensions were *vain*, yet he was forced to
 " allow them in a Manner *innate* : " —
 " From which Concession, a *Divine*, me-
 " thinks, might raise a *good Argument*
 " against him, for the *Truth* as well as
 " *Usefulness* of Religion." Now as some
 may possibly be at a Loss to determine here,

^h *Misc.* ii. c. i.

whether the noble Writer be in *Jest* or *S E C T. II.*
Earnest, the Argument he hints at is plainly

this: That if we look round the Works of Nature, we shall find an Analogy established, which seems a Proof, that this natural Fear which *presseth* so universally on the human Mind, hath a real and proportioned Object. The Argument hath been urged by many of great Name, in Favour of the *Hope* of future *Good*; and 'tis surely of equal Force, whatever that Force may be, when apply'd to the *Fear* of future *Ill*. For we see thro' the whole Creation, every Animal of whatever Species, directed by its Nature or the Hand of Providence, to fear and shun its proper and appointed Enemy. We find these Apprehensions universally suited to the Nature and Preservation of every Species among Birds, Beasts, Fishes, Insects. Nor is there one *Fear*, tho' sometimes *excessive* in its *Degree*, that is *erroneous* with regard to its *Object*. The *religious Fear*, therefore, which *forceth itself* so universally on the human Mind, in every Age and Nation, ignorant or knowing, civilized or barbarous; hath *probably* an Object suited to its Nature, ordained for the Welfare of the human Species. At least, this Argument

ESSAY
III.

ment must ever be of Weight with those, who draw their Ideas of future Existence from the *Instincts, Hopes, and Expectations* of the human Mind.

INDEED, on the noble Writer's refined Scheme of Morals, in which the natural Affections of the Mind are represented, as all-sufficient for the Purposes of human Happiness, this Argument must lose its Force; because, on this Supposition, the religious Fear is *supernumerary* and *useless*: But then this shews the Supposition itself to be *monstrous, absurd*, and contrary to the established Course of Nature; because Nature gives no Power or Passion, but to some proper and appointed End: The very *Existence* of the Passion, therefore, is a Proof of its Necessity.

Now, if indeed the religious Fear be *necessary*, as, we presume, hath been sufficiently proved in the preceding Essay; then, from hence will arise a strong and convincing Proof, that the Object of religious Fear is *real*. For we find thro' the whole Extent of created Being, that the Author of Nature hath annexed to all his Designs and Purposes, the proper Means or Objects, by which they may be fulfilled.

As

As therefore the religious Fear is not only S E C T.
II. interwoven with the Frame of Man, but absolutely necessary to his *Happiness*, its Object must be *real*; because, if *not*, you suppose the Creator to have given a NECESSARY *Passion*, without its *proper* and *appointed* Object; which would be a Contradiction to the *universal* and *known* Constitution of Things.

ON this Occasion, we may observe the Weakness of the *Epicurean* System, concerning *Providence*: For that Sect hath ever deny'd, that the Deity concerns himself with the *moral* Conduct of Man. But from the wise and benevolent Constitution of the natural World itself, a strong Proof ariseth in Support of God's *moral* Government of it, and of the Truth of the *Fears* and *Expectations* of the human Mind. For if we allow that he regards and preserves the natural Order and Symmetry of the Creation; that he hath formed this immense System of Being, and secur'd its Continuance and Welfare, by certain Laws, necessary to the Happiness of his Creatures; then we must on the same Foundation conclude, that he hath likewise established such *Motives* and *Laws* of *Action*, as may determine
Man

ESSAY *Man* to prosecute the same End. It were
 III. an Imputation on the Wisdom of the Deity,
 to conceive him as *doing the one*, and *omit-*
ting the other : Unless *Mind* and *Morals* be
 less worthy of his Regard, than *Matter* and
Motion.

BUT still the noble Writer proceeds in
 the Spirit of Derision, to expose the Ab-
 surdities and Mischiefs this misguided reli-
 gious Principle hath occasioned ; he often
 expatiates on the *superstitious Horrors*, and
furious Zeal which have had their Source
 in this *Principle* ; and thence, in the Way
 of Insinuation, concludes it *irrational* and
groundless.

THE Facts, it must be owned, are no-
 torious and undeniable : But the Conse-
 quence is no less evidently chimerical and
 vain. Lord SHAFTESBURY himself hath
 observed, that in Failure of a *just Prince*
 or *Magistrate*, Mankind are ready to sub-
 mit themselves even to a *Tyrant* : “ Like
 “ new-born Creatures, who have never
 “ seen their *Dam*, they will fancy one for
 “ themselves, and apply (as by Nature
 “ prompted) to some like Form for Favour
 “ and Protection. In the Room of a *true*
 “ *Foster-Father* and *Chief*, they will take
 “ after

“after a *false one* ; and in the Room of a
 “legal Government and just Prince, obey
 “even a Tyrant¹.” And hence he draws
 a strong Proof of the Force of the *social* or
herding Principle, even from *despotic* Power
 itself. Again he hath remarked, that
 “*Heroism* and *Philanthropy* are almost one
 “and the same ; yet by a small Misguidance
 “of the Affection, a Lover of Mankind
 “becomes a Ravager ; a Hero and Deli-
 “verer becomes an Oppressor and Destroy-
 “er^k.” ’Tis the same in Religion. Where
 the human Mind (ever restless in it’s Search
 for the great Center of created Being, on
 which alone it can perfectly repose itself)
 seeks, but cannot find the *true* God, it
 naturally sets up a *false one* in his Place :
 Here too, Mankind, “like new-born
 “Creatures, who have never seen their *Dam*,
 “will fancy one for themselves, and apply
 “(as by Nature prompted) to some like
 “Form for Favour and Protection. In the
 “Room of a *true Foster-Father*, they will
 “take after a *false one* ; and in the Room
 “of an *all-perfect* God, worship even an
 “*Idol*.” The religious Principle, thus
 misguided, breaks forth indeed, into Enor-

¹ *Wit. and H. P.* iii. § 1.^k *Ib* § 2.

ESSAY
III.

mities the most pernicious and destructive :
Hence indeed, “ by a small Misguidance of
“ the Affection, a *Lover of Mankind* be-
“ comes a *Ravager* ; a *Saint*, an *Oppressor*
“ and *Destroyer*.” But as from the Abuse
of the *social* Principle, so here, in that of
the *religious* one, no other Consequence can
be justly drawn, but that it is *natural* and
strong.

BUT further, the noble Writer finds the
Notion of future Punishment, *inconsistent*
with his Idea of *divine Goodness*. Therefore,
says he, “ We can have no Dread or Sus-
“ picion to make us uneasy : For it is
“ *Malice only*, and not *Goodness*, which can
“ make us afraid¹.”

YET, on another Occasion, his Lordship
can affirm, and justly, that, “ a Man of *Tem-*
“ *per* may resist or *punish without Anger*.”
And if so, why may not *divine Goodness*
make us *afraid* ? For as *divine Goodness*
regards the greatest Happiness of all it's
Creatures ; so, if Punishment be *necessary*
to that End, *divine Goodness* will *therefore*
ORDAIN PUNISHMENT. To this Purpose,
a Writer of distinguished Rank and Pene-
tration : “ In Reality, Goodness is the natu-

¹ *Enq.* B. ii. Part ii. § 2.

“ ral and just Object of Fear to an ill Man. S E C T.

II.

“ Malice may be appeased or fatiated :
 “ Humour may change : But Goodness is
 “ as a fixed, steady immoveable Principle
 “ of Action. If either of the Former holds
 “ the Sword of Justice, there is plainly
 “ Ground for the greatest of Crimes to hope
 “ for Impunity. But if it be Goodness,
 “ there can be no possible Hope, whilst
 “ the Reasons of Things, or the Ends of
 “ Government call for Punishment. Thus
 “ every one sees how much greater Chance
 “ of Impunity an ill Man has, in a partial
 “ Administration, than in a just and up-
 “ right one. It is said, that the Interest or
 “ Good of the Whole, must be the Interest
 “ of the universal Being ; and that he can
 “ have no other. Be it so. This Author
 “ (Ld. S.) has proved that Vice is naturally
 “ the Misery of Mankind in this World :
 “ Consequently it was for the Good of the
 “ Whole, that it should be so. What
 “ Shadow of Reason then is there to assert,
 “ that this may not be the Case hereafter ?
 “ Danger of future Punishment (and if
 “ there be Danger, there is Ground of Fear)
 “ no more supposes Malice, than the pre-
 “ sent Feeling of Punishment does’.”

^m Dr. Butler's Sermons, Preface, p. 21.

THUS

ESSAY
III.

THUS the noble Writer's Derision and Argumentation are equally chimerical and impious; as it appears, that the natural Fears and Expectations of the human Mind are at least founded in Probability.

SECTION III.

SECT.
III.

HIS Lordship's Opinions being so little favourable to *natural Religion*, we cannot wonder, if we find him, on every possible Occasion, throwing out Insinuations and virulent Remarks, in Order to disgrace *reveald*. The first that will deserve our Notice, are such as tend to invalidate the *Credibility of Scripture History*.

HE tells us, "He who says he believes
" *for certain*, or is *assured* of what he be-
" lieves, either speaks *ridiculously*, or says in
" Effect, he believes strongly, but *is not* sure:
" So that whoever is not conscious of Reve-
" lation, nor has certain Knowledge of any
" Miracle or Sign, can be no more than *scep-*
" *tick in the Case*: And the best Christian in
" the World, who being destitute of the Means
" of Certainty, depends only on History and
" Tradition for his Belief of these particu-
" lars, is at best but a *sceptick Christian*."

^a *Misc. ii. c. 2.*

Now

Now it should seem, that the Dexterity ^{SECT.}
of this Passage lies in a new Application of ^{III.}
two or three Words. For, by "*certain* and
"*assured*" he means *more*, by "*Scepticism*"
he means much *less*, than it is ever used to
signify. And thus (as in Dr. *Mandeville's*
Philosophy already ° criticized) wherever
we have not *Demonstration*, 'tis plain we
must needs be *Sceptics*.

BUT if indeed we must be *Sceptics* in
Revealed Religion, on this Account; the
same Consequence will follow, with Regard
to every other Kind of Knowledge that de-
pends on *human Testimony*. We must be *Scep-*
tics too, in our Belief of every *past* Trans-
action; nay of every thing transacted in our
own Times, except only of what falls with-
in the narrow Circle of our proper *Obser-*
vation. The Manners of *Men*, the Site of
Countries, the Varieties of *Nature*, the Truths
of *Philosophy*, the very Food we eat, and
Liquids we drink, are all received on the
sole Evidence of human Testimony. But
what Name would he merit among Men,
who in these Instances should say, "he does
"not believe for certain, or is not assured
"of what he believes," till in every Case he

° See above, *Essay* ii.

ESSAY should be impelled by the Force of *Demon-*
 III. *stration*, or the Evidence of *Sense*?

AND indeed, on other Occasions, where *Christianity* is not concerned, the noble Writer can speak in a very different, and much juster Manner. For thus he appeals to Nature, in *Proof* of the Wisdom and Goodness of the Creator. "Thus, too, in
 " the System of the *bigger* World. See there
 " the mutual Dependency of things: The
 " Relation of one to another; of the Sun to
 " this inhabited Earth; and of the *Earth*
 " and *other Planets* to the *Sun*! The Order,
 " Union, and Coherence of the *whole*! And
 " know, my ingenious Friend, that by this
 " Survey you will be obliged to own the
 " *universal System*, and *coherent Scheme* of
 " things; to be *established on* ABUNDANT
 " PROOF, capable of *convincing* any fair
 " and just Contemplator of the Works of
 " Nature P." His Lordship's Argument is surely just. Yet, is there one to be found among five Hundred of those, who are thus *convinced* of the wise Structure of the Universe, who have ever taken a *Survey* of this immense System, except only in the *Books* and *Diagrams* of *experienced Philosophers*?

r *Moralist*, P. ii. § 4.

How

How few are capable even of comprehending the *Demonstrations*, on which the Truth of the *Copernican System* is established; or receiving, on any other Proof than that of *human Testimony*, “the Relation of the *Earth* “and *other Planets* to the *Sun*, the *Order*, “*Union*, and *Coherence* of the *whole*?” It cannot be supposed, that even the noble Writer himself ever went thro’ the tedious Process of *Experiment* and *Calculation*, which alone can give absolute *Certainty* in this extensive Subject. Yet we find, he is not in any Degree, “sceptical in the Case;” but very rationally determines, that the Wisdom of the Deity in “this universal System, “is *established* on *abundant Proof*, capable “of *convincing* any *fair* and *just* Contem-
“plator of the Works of Nature.”

It appears then, that a Confidence in the Veracity of others is not peculiar to the Belief of *Revealed Religion*: The same takes Place in almost every Subject. More particularly, we see, that in the *History of Nature*, as in that of *Revelation*, the Evidence of human *Testimony* is the only Sort of Proof that can be given to Mankind: And whoever allows this Proof, as being “*abun-*
“*dant* and *convincing*” in the *one*, and dis-

ESSAY allows or despiseth it in the *other*, how self
 III. satisfied soever he may be in his own *Imagi-*
nation, is neither a *fair* nor a *just* Contem-
 plator of the Works and the Ways of *Pro-*
vidence.

IF therefore any Objection lies against the Credibility of the *Scripture History*, it must consist in maintaining, not “that human Testimony is insufficient to support it,” but “that in Fact, it is not sufficiently supported by the Evidence of human Testimony.” If so; this Defect must arise, either from a Want of *External Evidence* : Or Secondly, because the Facts, Doctrines, and Composition of the Bible, are such, that no Testimony whatever can convince us that it is a *divine Revelation*.

WITH REGARD to the first of these, “the Testimony on which the Authenticity of the Gospel History is founded :” This the noble Writer hath attacked by a long Chain of Insinuations, in his last *Miscellany*^a, Where, in the Way of *Dialogue*, he hath indeed amply repaid the Treatment, which in the preceding Chapter he charges upon the *Clergy*. For here he hath introduced two of that *Order*, who, to use his own Ex-

^a *Misc.* v. c. 3.

pression,

pression, "are indeed his very legitimate and
 " obsequious *Puppets*, who co-operate in the S E C T.
III.
 " most officious Manner with the Author,
 " towards the Display of his own proper
 " Wit, and the Establishment of his
 " private Opinion and Maxims^r." " Where
 " after the poor Phantom or Shadow of an
 " Adversary, has said as little for his Cause
 " as can be imagined, and given as many
 " Opens and Advantages as could be de-
 " fired, he lies down for good and all; and
 " passively submits to the killing Strokes of
 " his unmerciful Conqueror^s."

To these Gentlemen the noble Writer assigns the *Herculean* Labour, of proving the Necessity of an absolute *Uniformity* in Opinion. *A hopeful Project indeed!* as his Lordship calls it elsewhere. No Wonder he comes off *Conqueror*, in such a Debate. But here lies the Peculiarity of his Conduct: That while he pretends only to prove, that the Scripture cannot be a Foundation for Uniformity of Opinion *in all things*; he hath thrown out such Insinuations, as evidently imply, that there can be no Foundation for believing the Truth of *any thing* the Gospel History contains. He says, he

^r Ib. c. 2.^s Ib.

ESSAY began by desiring them "to explain the
 III. " Word *Scripture*, and by enquiring into
 " the Original of this Collection of antient-
 " er and later Tracts, which in general
 " they comprehended under that Title:
 " whether it were the *apocryphal* Scripture,
 " or the more *canonical*? the *full* or *half-*
 " *authorized*? the *doubtful* or the *certain*?
 " the *controverted* or *uncontroverted*? the
 " *singly* read, or that of *various* Reading?
 " the Texts of *these* Manuscripts or of
 " *those*? the Transcripts, Copies, Titles,
 " Catalogues, of *this* Church and Nation,
 " or of *that other*? of this Sect and Party,
 " or of another? of those in one Age called
 " Orthodox, and in Possession of Power, or
 " of those who, in another, overthrew their
 " Predecessor's Authority; and, in their
 " Turn also, assumed the Guardianship and
 " Power of holy Things? For how these
 " sacred Records were guarded in those
 " Ages, might easily (he said) be *imagined*
 " by any one who had the least Insight
 " into the History of those Times, which
 " we called *Primitive*, and those Charac-
 " ters of Men, whom we styled Fathers of
 " the Church^t."

^t *Misc.* v. c. 3.

HERE,

HERE, as his Lordship drags us into the *beaten Track of Controversy*, the best Compliment that can be paid the Reader, is to carry him thro' it by the shortest Way. The stale Objections here raked together by the noble Author have been so often, and so fully refuted, by a Variety of excellent Writers, that, to many, it may seem a needless Task, even to touch upon the Subject^v.

S E C T.
III.

HOWEVER, for the Satisfaction of those who may think it necessary, a summary View of the Evidence is here subjoined.

THE Authenticity, therefore, of the Books of the *new Testament*, appears to be founded on the strongest moral Evidence, because from the earliest Ages, we find them ascribed to the Apostles and Evangelists, whose Names they bear. Thus St. PAUL's Epistles are mentioned by St. PETER, and cited by CLEMENS ROMANUS, who lived in the Reign of CLAUDIUS, even before St. PAUL was carried Prisoner to ROME. POLYCARP and IRENÆUS were for some Time contemporary with St. JOHN : They both cite

^v Du Pin, Le Clerc, Tillemont, Whitby, Lardner, Phil. Lipsiensis, &c. and very lately Mr. Fortin, in his learned Remarks on *Ecclesiastical History*.

ESSAY
III.

the four Gospels, and affirm they were all written by the Apostles and Evangelists, whose Names they bear. JUSTIN MARTYR and CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, confirm their Accounts in the following Century: And the great ORIGEN, with whom I shall close the Catalogue, and who lived in the Reign of SEVERUS, in his Book against CELSUS hath cited *all* the *Gospels*, and *most*, if not *all* the *Epistles*, under the Names they now bear: And the Words of the several Citations perfectly agree with those of the New Testament, now in Use. Such a full Proof of the Genuineness of these sacred Records, as is not to be parallel'd, concerning any other Book, of *equal* or even of much *less* *Antiquity*.

The *internal* Proof of their Genuineness, arising from their *Style* and *Composition*, is no less eminent and particular. The Genius of every Book, is so perfectly agreeable to the Character and Education of it's respective Author; every Custom described or alluded to, either *Jewish*, *Greek*, or *Roman*, so entirely suited to the *Times*; every Incident so *natural*, so *occasional*, so *particular*, so perfectly *indentify'd*, that it were the very
Extreme

Extreme of Ignorance and Folly, to raise a Doubt on this Subject. S E C T.
III.

THAT the Gospel-History hath been transmitted to us, *pure and uncorrupted*, we have no less Reason to believe. 'Tis well known how zealous the primitive Christians were in the Preservation of the Scriptures: We know, they regarded them as their chief and dearest Treasure; and often laid down their Lives, rather than deliver the sacred Records to their Enemies, who used every Art of Terror, to seize and destroy them. Again, the Scriptures were not then locked up from the Laity, as now in the *Roman Church*: But Copies were taken, dispersed, and became immensely numerous. They were universally read at the Times of public Worship, in different Nations of the World. To this we may add, that as *now*, so *then*, different Sects and Parties subsisted, who all appealed to Scripture for Proof of their several Opinions; and these, 'tis evident, must have been so many *Checks* upon each other, to the general Exclusion of Mistake and Fraud^x.

^xThe JEWS and SAMARITANS were *Checks* upon each other in the same Manner, for the Preservation of the Purity of the *Pentateuch*. The *Samaritan Pentateuch*.

ESSAY
III.

THIS being the real State of the Case; let us now consider the noble Writer's Questions. He asks, whether by Scripture be understood "the apocryphal or more canonical? "the full or half-authorized? the doubtful "or the certain? the controverted or uncontroverted?" These Questions are nearly synonymous, and one short Reply will clear them all. There are many Books, concerning which there never was *any Doubt*. There are some, concerning which the Doubts have been fully *cleared up*. There are others, concerning which the Doubts have been *confirmed*. Of the first Kind are *all* the *Gospels*, and *most* of the *Epistles*: Of the second, are the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the *second* of *Peter*, *second* and *third* of *John*, that of *Jude*, and the *Apocalypse*: Of the third Kind, are the *apocryphal* Books; therefore indeed so called.

THE noble Author goes on. "The "single read, or that of *various* Reading?"

teuch was printed in the last Century: And, "after "Two thousand Years Discord between the Two Nations, varies as little from the other, as any *Classic* "Author in less Tract of Time has disagreed from itself, by the *unavoidable Mistakes* of so many *Transcribers*." See *Phil. Lipsiens*.

My

My Lord, if by *single read* you mean a Book ^{SECT. III.} in which there are no various Readings, there are none *single read*: Nor, probably, was there ever any Book *single read*, that went thro' more than one Edition: at least, before the Invention of *Printing*. And as the Scriptures were oftener transcribed than any other Book, so, a greater Variety of Readings must naturally take Place. But I must inform your Lordship, from the learned PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS, that this is the most illiterate of all Cavils: For that in Fact, we have the *Sense* of those ancient Authors most *entire*, where the various Readings are most numerous: As, of those Authors where the Varieties are *fewest*, the *Sense* is most mutilated or obscure^y. But if by *single read*, your Lordship means an authentic Text collected and composed out of the various Readings, I beg leave to inform you, there is no such in the Protestant Churches. They have been too modest to attempt any such thing. Nor does the *Truth* suffer by it: For as the learned Critic, just before quoted, observes, the most faulty Copy of the new Testament now in

^y For a full View of this Argument, See *Phil. Lipsiens.*

ESSAY being, does not obscure one moral Doctrine or one Article of Faith.
III.

AGAIN the noble Writer goes on, in a Profusion of synonymous Terms: "The
" Transcripts, Copies, Titles, Catalogues,
" of this Church or that? of this Sect or
" Party, or another? of those in one Age
" called orthodox, or those who in another
" Age overthrew them?" What unexperienced Person would not imagine from hence, that *different* Churches, Sects, or Parties, had *each* of them a Bible different from the rest? Yet 'tis certain, that however these Parties differed in Opinions, we find from their Writings now subsisting, that they all appealed to one common Scripture for their Support.

THE noble Writer takes his Leave by paying a Compliment to these primitive Writers called the Fathers of the Church. "How these sacred Records were *guarded*
" in those Ages, might be easily *imagined*," &c. — But to *imagine*, is a much easier Task than to *prove*; especially when Imagination is helped forward by Inclination. *Guarded* indeed they were, as we have seen, from Interpolation and Falseness. But if he means to insinuate, that they were *guard-*
ed

ed from *Inspection* and *Criticism*, he does great Injustice to Christianity. For what-
ever Marks of secular Views may be discovered in the Conduct of the ancient Christians in the succeeding Ages, we may safely bid Defiance to the noble Writer's Admirers, to shew any thing of this Kind in the Characters of those to whose Testimony we have here appealed; and on whose Testimony, joined to that of their numerous and ingenuous Contemporaries, the Authenticity of the Gospel-History depends. They were far from acting or writing with a View to temporal Advantage; they were struggling under the Weight of heavy Persecutions; had no Motives to preach or write, but the great Expectation of Happiness hereafter, founded on a firm Belief of that holy Religion, which they propagated with an Effect *almost*, if not *indeed*, *miraculous*.

ON this Occasion I cannot but observe a strange Insinuation thrown out elsewhere by the noble Writer; which, however, is so glaring a Falsehood, that he finds himself obliged to disavow it, even while he labours to impress it on his Reader's Imagination, in all the Colours of Eloquence. "If,
" says

ESSAY " says he, the collateral Testimony of other
 III. " ancient Records were destroyed, there
 " would be less Argument or Plea remain-
 " ing against that natural Suspicion of those
 " who are called Sceptical, that the holy
 " Records themselves were no other than
 " the pure Invention or artificial Compile-
 " ment of an interested Party, in Behalf of
 " the *richest Corporation*, and most *profita-*
 " *ble Monopoly* in the World²." Now if
 his Lordship be indeed in earnest in urging
 this Insinuation, he must believe, that *one*
Set of Men *preached*, and *wrote*, and en-
 dured *Bonds* and *Imprisonment*, *Torments*
 and *Death*; to the End that *another Set* of
 Men, some *three* or *four Hundred Years*
 after, might enjoy the *rich Corporations* and
profitable Monopoly of *Church Preferments*.
 How far this may be a Proof of the noble
 Writer's *Sagacity*, I shall leave others to de-
 termine. But if he *believes not* the Insinu-
 ation, as indeed he seems to *disbelieve* it,
 then we cannot surely hesitate a Moment
 concerning the Measure of his *Sincer-*
ity.

THE Gentleman therefore who makes
 so ridiculous a Figure in the supposed Con-

² *Misc. v. c. 1.*

versation,

versation, had he not been a poor *obsequious Puppet*, might have returned one general and satisfactory Answer to all these extraordinary Questions. He might have desired his Lordship “to chuse which he should like *best* or *worst* among all these controverted Copies, various Readings, Manuscripts, and Catalogues adopted by whatever Church, Sect, or Party.” Nay, he might have desired him to chuse any of the almost infinite Number of Translations made of these Books in distant Countries and Ages: And taking that to be the Scripture he appealed to, might safely have relied on it, as amply sufficient for all the great Purposes of *Religion* and *Christianity*.

SECT.
III.

SECTION IV.

SINCE therefore the *Scripture History* appears to be supported by *higher Degrees* of human Testimony, than any other ancient Writing; the only Objections of real Weight against it, must be drawn from its *internal Structure*: from the Facts it *relates*, the Doctrines it *inculcates*, or the Form of its *Composition*.

SECT.
IV.

THE *Facts* related, being as it were the Foundation of all, will naturally come first under

ESSAY
III.

under Consideration. "Now these, say
"the Enemies of Christianity, are *miracu-*
"lous or *out of Nature*, and therefore ab-
"surd: For *as they can prove nothing*, so it
"is impossible that Accounts of this Kind
"could be so essentially mingled with a
"Religion that should come from God."

ON this Foundation the noble Writer
hath taken frequent Occasion to deride what
he calls the "Mockery of Miracles^a;" par-
ticularly those of our Saviour^b. Here we
shall find him striking at the very Basis of
all revealed Religion, while he asserts, that,
even supposing the Truth of the Facts,
"Miracles cannot witness either for God or
"Men, nor are any Proof either of Divi-
"nity or Revelation^c." But that his Ar-
gument may be fairly represented, let it
appear in his own Words. "The Con-
"templation of the Universe, its Laws
"and Government, was (I aver'd) the
"only Means which could establish the
"sound Belief of a Deity. For what tho'
"innumerable Miracles from every Part
"assailed the Sense, and gave the trembling
"Soul no Respite? What tho' the Sky
"should suddenly open, and all kinds of

^a *Misc.* ii. c. 2.
Part ii. § 5. *passim*.

^b *Ib.* c. 3.

^c *Moralists*,

“ Prodigies appear, Voices be heard, or S E C T.
IV.
“ Characters read? What would this evince

“ more, than that there was certain Powers
“ could do all this? But what Powers;
“ whether one or more; whether superior
“ or subaltern; mortal or immortal; wise or
“ foolish; just or unjust; good or bad: This
“ would still remain a Mystery; as would
“ the *true Intention*, the *Infallibility* or *Cer-*
“ *tainty* of whatever *these Powers asserted*^d.”

’Tis remarkable, that the noble Writer pretends here only to shew, that Miracles are no Proof of the *Existence* of God: Yet in the Conclusion of his Argument, he brings it home to the Case of *Revelation*: To “ the true *Intention*, the *Infallibility* or “ *Certainty* of whatever *these Powers AS-*
“ *SERTED*.” This is clearly the Scope of his Argument: And so indeed hath it been understood by his *Under-workmen* in *Infidelity*, who have with great Industry retailed this Objection. As it is a Circumstance of the last Importance in Regard to the Truth of *Christianity*, it cannot be an unseasonable Task, to shew in the fullest Manner the Vanity and Error of this trite Cavil.

BUT, instead of considering *single Acts* of supernatural or *miraculous Power*, as be-

^d Ib.

T

ing

ESSAY
 III. ing performed in Attestation of any *particular Doctrine*, (which hath been the general Way of treating this Question) 'tis my Design to consider as one Object, "that vast *Series*" and *Concatenation* of miraculous Acts, "recorded in the Old and New Testament, "wrought thro' a long Succession of Ages, "for the *Carrying on, Support, and Completion* of the *Christian Dispensation*."

WITH this View therefore let us first consider the means by which Mankind are justly convinced of the *Being* of a *God*. Now this Conviction, 'tis allowed by all, ariseth from a *Union* of *Power, Wisdom, and Goodness*, displayed in the visible Creation. From this *Union* alone arises the Idea of an *all-perfect Being*: so that a Failure in any of these three essential Circumstances would *destroy* the Idea of a *God*. The *Goodness* of the Deity is seen in the designed End or Purpose of the Creation, which is, "The Happiness of all "his Creatures:" His *Wisdom* is seen, in the proper Means employed for the Accomplishment of this great End: His *Power* fulfills what Goodness had intended, and Wisdom contrived, by putting these Means in Execution. Hence then alone we obtain the Idea of a *Divinity*, from a *Union* of perfect *Goodness, Wisdom, and Power*.

'TIS

'TIS likewise, I think, acknowledged by ^{SECT.}
all *Theists*, that, as to the divine Power, it ^{IV.}
may work its Intentions, either by a continued and uninterrupted Superintendency, or Agency on Matter, or by impressing certain original and permanent Qualities upon it. Which of these two Kinds of Operation may really prevail in Nature, is perhaps beyond the Reach of human Knowledge, clearly to determine. The *Newtonian* Philosophy indeed renders it highly probable, that the *continued Agency* of God prevails. But a Determination in this Subject is indeed of no Consequence; since, which soever of these Methods be ordained, the *divine Power* is equally display'd, while it ministers to the Ends of *Goodness* and *Wisdom*.

'TIS equally plain, that, if the divine Goodness should determine to raise Mankind to *higher Degrees* of *Knowledge* and *Virtue*, than what they could attain to by the pre-established Laws of Nature; or to free them from *Defects* and *Miseries*, occasioned by any incidental and *voluntary* Corruptions, *posterior* to their *Creation*; 'tis equally plain, I say, that an Exertion of *supernatural Power* for the Accomplishment

ESSAY of *this End*, would be a *Display, Proof, or*
III. *Revelation of the Divinity*, entirely similar
to that which arises from the Works of
Nature. For both *here*, and in the Works
of *Nature*, the Proof of the Divinity ariseth,
not from mere uniform Acts of Power, but
from the *Subserviency* of divine *Power*
to this one great End, the *Production* of
human *Happiness*. Here then, the noble
Writer's Objection is essentially defective:
What he affirms is either *false*, or *foreign* to
the Question. For if we suppose (and the
present Question is put upon this Footing
only) that the miraculous or supernatural
Effects are evidently subservient to similar
Ends of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, as appear in
the Works of the Creation; then sure, we
have equal Reason to conclude, and be
convinced, that they are the Effects of *one*
Power; — of one *superior* and *immortal*
Power; — of one Power, *wise, just, and*
good; — In a word, of that Power which
first brought Nature into Being, established
Laws for the Welfare of his Creatures;
and when the Happiness of his Creatures
requires an Interposition, gives still further
Evidences of his *Goodness, Wisdom, and Om-*
nipotence,

impotence, by controuling those Laws which himself had established.

SECT.
IV.

LET us now apply these Principles to the *Christian* Dispensation. “This, we
“say, was a Scheme of Providence, which
“still continues operating; whereby the
“Deity determined to raise fallen and cor-
“rupted Man to higher Degrees of *Know-*
“*ledge, Virtue, and Happiness*, than what
“by Nature he could have attained.” In
this Design, the *divine* GOODNESS is emi-
nently displayed.

THE Means, whereby this great Design
was accomplished, was, “by separating a
“peculiar People from the rest of Man-
“kind; not for their own Sakes, but for
“the Sake of all; by preserving them
“amidst their Enemies; by leading them
“forth into a distant Country; by establish-
“ing there the Worship of the *one* God, in
“Opposition to the Idolatries of surround-
“ing Nations: ’Till, when the Fulness of
“Time should come, and Mankind be ca-
“pable of receiving a more perfect Reve-
“lation, a Saviour JESUS CHRIST should be
“sent, to free Mankind from the Power of
“Ignorance and Sin; to bring Life and Im-
“mortality to Light, and communicate to

ESSAY " all Men the most perfect practical Know-
 III. ledge of the true God, and of every moral
 " Duty." In this Dispensation is no less
 eminently displayed the *divine* WISDOM.

BUT what less than Omnipotence itself could secure the perfect Execution of a Plan so *mighty* and *extensive*? Which reaching thro' the Compass of many, and distant Ages, must combat the *Power*, controul the *Prejudices*, and work its Way thro' the *discordant Manners* and *Opinions* of all the Kingdoms of the Earth. On this Account the immediate Exertion of divine Power was necessary for its *Proof*, *Support*, and *Completion*. Accordingly, we find its omnipotent Author, carrying on this Scheme of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, with a *mighty Hand*, and an *out-stretched Arm*. " He sent a
 " Man before his People, even JOSEPH,
 " who was sold to be a Bond-Servant: He
 " increased his People exceedingly, and
 " made them stronger than their Enemies.
 " He sent MOSES his Servant, and AARON:
 " And these shewed his *Tokens* among them;
 " and *Wonders* in the Land of *Ham*. He
 " sent Darkness, and it was dark; and turned
 " their Waters into Blood. Their Land
 " brought forth Frogs, yea, even in their
 " King's

“ King’s Chambers. He gave them Hail-
 “ stones for Rain, and Flames of Fire in
 “ their Land. He spake the Word, and
 “ the Locusts came innumerable, and de-
 “ voured the Fruit of their Ground. He
 “ smote all the First-born in their Land,
 “ even the chief of all their Strength. He
 “ brought forth his People from among
 “ them : He spread out a Cloud to be a
 “ Covering, and Fire to give them Light in
 “ the Night-Season. He rebuked the *Red-*
 “ *Sea* also, and it was dried up ; so he led
 “ them thro’ the Deep as thro’ a Wilder-
 “ ness. At their Desire he brought Quails,
 “ and filled them with the Bread of Heaven.
 “ He opened the Rock of Stone, so that
 “ Rivers ran in dry Places.—Yet within a
 “ while they forgot his Works, and tempt-
 “ ed God in the Desert : Then the Earth
 “ opened, and swallowed up *Dathan*, and
 “ covered the Congregation of *Abiram*.
 “ They joined themselves unto *Baal-Peor*,
 “ and provoked him with their own Inven-
 “ tions ; so the Plague was great among
 “ them : Then, being chastised, they turn-
 “ ed to their God. He led them over *Jor-*
 “ *dan* ; the Waters divided to let them pass.
 “ He discomfited their Enemies : At his

ESSAY
III.

“ Word the Sun abode in the midst of
“ Heaven ; and the Moon stood still, and
“ hasted not to go down for a whole Day.
“ So he gave the Kingdoms of *Canaan* to
“ be an Heritage unto his People ; that all
“ the Nations of the World might know
“ that the Hand of the Lord is mighty,
“ and that they might fear the Lord con-
“ tinually.”

HERE then we see, that this mighty Series of miraculous Acts recorded in the *Old Testament*, being *the very Means* of *preserving* and *separating* the ISRAELITES from the *rest* of Mankind, and at the same time designed to impress them with a *lasting Idea* of the uncontrollable and *immediate Power* of God ; were generally *awakening* Instances of *Omnipotence*, often of *Justice* and *Terror*, in the Punishment of *cruel EGYPTIANS*, *rebellious JEWS*, and *idolatrous Nations*.

IN pursuing this vast Concatenation of divine Power thro’ the Series of Miracles recorded in the *New Testament*, and wrought for the same End, the *Completion* of *Christianity*, we shall find them of a very *different* Nature and *Complexion* : Yet still, admirably suited to accomplish the *same* designed *Ends* of *Providence*. For now the *Fulness*
of

of *Time* was come, in which the Wisdom of the Deity ordained the immediate Establishment of a Religion of perfect *Purity* and boundless *Love*. Accordingly, the Series of miraculous Acts wrought for this great End, were such as must naturally engage Mankind to a *favourable Reception* of *Christianity*; were the very *Image* and Transcript, expressed the very *Genius* of that most *amiable* Religion they were brought to *support* and *establish*; in a word, were continued Instances of *Omnipotence*, joined with *unbounded Charity*, divine *Compassion*, and *Benevolence*.

THE Birth of JESUS was proclaimed by a glorious Apparition of superior Beings, who declared the End of his coming in that divine Song of Triumph, "Glory to God
" in the highest, and on Earth Peace, Good
" Will towards Men!" His Life was one continued Scene of divine Power, Wisdom, and Beneficence. He gave Eyes to the Blind; Ears to the Deaf; and Feet to the Lame: He raised the Dead to Life, rebuked the raging Elements, and made the Winds and Seas obey him. When, to fulfill the Decrees of Heaven, and complete the great Work of Man's Redemption, he submitted to an ignominious Death, the
Vail

ESSAY
 III.

Vail of the Temple was rent in twain: A general Darkneſs involved, and an Earthquake ſhook, the City. The ſame Omnipotence by which he wrought his Miracles, raiſed him from the Grave; and after a ſhort ſtay on Earth, during which he ſtrengthened and confirmed his deſponding Followers, tranſlated him to Heaven. And now, a new and *unexpected* Scene of divine and miraculous Power opened on Mankind, for the full Eſtabliſhment of *Chriſtianity*. The Spirit of God came down, and dwelt with the Apoſtles; they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance. They were inveſted with ſupernatural Power to heal Diſeaſes; were impowered to ſtrike dead the deceitful ANANIAS and SAPPHIRA; and when imprifoned were delivered by the immediate Hand of God. By theſe Means, Chriſtianity gained a numerous Train of Proſelytes among the JEWS; but the great Work of converting the Gentiles was not yet begun. To this End the Apoſtle PAUL was deſtined; and converted to Chriſtianity by an amazing Act of ſupernatural and divine Power. In this important Miniſtry he was frequently preſerved
 by

by the miraculous Care of Providence ; did himself perform stupendous Acts of Power and Beneficence ; by these Means converting Multitudes among the Gentiles, and planting Christianity in the most knowing and polished Nations of the Earth.

SECT.
IV.

To this irresistible Chain of Evidence, arising from the miraculous Exertion of divine Power, we may add another *collateral* Proof, arising from the *miraculous* Emanations of divine *Fore-knowledge*, recorded in the Bible, and delivered in PROPHECY thro' a Series of Ages, all centering in the same Point, the foretelling the *Completion* of this immense Plan of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*. These *Predictions* were fulfilled in the Advent, Life, Death, and Resurrection of our *Saviour* ; who himself foretold the Success of his Apostles among the Gentiles, and the final Dissolution of the Jewish Polity. This came to pass in the Destruction of the *Temple* : And when a bitter Enemy to Christianity attempted to make void the Decrees of Heaven in rebuilding this *Temple*, (the only Circumstance of Union that could ever make the JEWS *once more a People*) the very Foundations were rent in Pieces by an Earthquake,

ESSAY Earthquake, and the mad Affailants against
 III. *Omnipotence* buried in the Ruins.

FROM this mighty *Union*, therefore, ariseth a Proof fimilar to that which we obtain from the Works of Nature. For as in *these* we see the Happiness of the Creation *intended, plann'd, and produced*, and from hence discover the Agency of the Deity; so in the Progress and Completion of *Christianity* we find a parallel Display of the divine Attributes: We see the Advancement of Man's Happiness *determined* by divine GOODNESS, *plann'd* by divine WISDOM, *foretold* by divine KNOWLEDGE, *accomplished* by divine POWER: and hence, as in *Nature*, obtain a full *Manifestation, Proof, or Revelation* of the DEITY.

As this seems to be the true Light, in which the Evidence arising from the Scripture-Miracles ought to be placed, it may be proper now to add a few Observations on what hath been offered on this Subject, both by the *Defenders* and the *Adversaries* of *Christianity*.

I. As to the Degree of Proof or Evidence arising from a *single Miracle* in Support of any *particular Doctrine*; whatever Force it may carry, 'tis a Point, which we

are by no Means at present concerned to de- S E C T.
IV.
termine : Because, as we have seen, in the
Progress of the Christian Dispensation,
there is a vast *Series* or *Chain*, all *uniting* in
one common End. It might be considered,
in the same Manner, by those who write in
Proof of the Being of a God, “ What Evi-
“ dence of his Being would arise from a
“ single *Vegetable* or *Animal*, unconnected
“ with the rest of the Creation.” But how-
ever satisfying a single Fact of this Kind
may be to impartial Minds, it were surely
weak to argue on this Foundation *only*,
while we can appeal to that mighty *Union*
of Design which appears in the Works of
Nature. It should therefore seem, that the
Defenders of Christianity have generally
set this Evidence in too *detached* and *par-*
ticular a Light : For tho’ the Proof arising
from a single Miracle, in Support of a par-
ticular Doctrine may be of sufficient Force
to convince an equitable Mind ; yet sure,
’tis infinitely stronger and more satisfactory,
if we *view at once* the whole *Chain* of Mira-
cles, by which the great Scheme of *Christi-*
anity was propagated, as *one* vast *Object* :
Because in this View, we discover innume-
rable Circumstances of *mutual Relation* and
Agreement,

ESSAY
III.

Agreement, similar to those which are Proofs of *final Causes* in the natural World : In a word, we discover that *Union of Design*, that Concurrence of infinite *Goodness, Wisdom, and Power*, which is the sure Indication of the *Divinity*.

II. IF in a Dispensation thus proved to be from God by all these concurring Signatures of Divinity, any *incidental Circumstances* should be found, which are *unaccountable* to human Reason ; 'tis the Part of human Reason to *acquiesce* in this *mysterious* and *unknown* Part, from what is *clear* and *known*. Because in a System or Dispensation planned by *infinite* Wisdom, there *must* of Necessity be something which *finite* Wisdom cannot comprehend. This the noble Writer allows with Regard to the Works of Nature. “ If, saith he, in this “ *mighty Union*, there be such Relations of “ Parts one to another as are not easily discovered ; if on this Account, the *End* and “ *Use* of Things does not every where appear, there is *no Wonder* ; since 'tis indeed “ no more than what *must happen* of “ *Necessity*. Nor could supreme Wisdom “ have otherwise ordered it. For in an Infinity of things thus relative, a *Mind* “ *which*

“ which sees not infinitely, can see nothing SECT.
IV.
“ fully.”

III. HENCE therefore may be evinced the Vanity of this Cavil, “ that nothing can
“ be proved to be a divine Revelation which
“ is not discoverable by human Reason ;
“ since whatever is reasonable needs no Mi-
“ racle to confirm it, and whatever is be-
“ yond the Reach of Reason cannot be made
“ to appear reasonable by any Miracle what-
“ soever^f.” Hence, I say, the Vanity of
this Cavil is evident. Because, as in Nature,
so in Revelation, the full Evidence of Di-
vinity is founded, not on single detached
Circumstances, but on a mighty *Union* or
Concatenation of Facts, implying the most
perfect *Wisdom*, *Power*, and *Goodness*. This
Foundation being once laid, if any thing *in-*
cidental in either Case appears unaccounta-
ble as to its *End* or *Use*, it is naturally and
properly involved, or taken in as a *Part* of
this *immense Design*, which, thro’ its vast
Extent, must needs be *incomprehensible* to
human Reason.

IV. As to the Objection, “ that Mira-
“ cles may be wrought by inferior or sub-

^e *Moralists*, P. ii. § 4.
Tindal, *Morgan*, and others.

^f An Objection urged by

“ altern

ESSAY "altern Beings :'" This vanishes at once
 III.
 — with Regard to the *Christian* Dispensation, on the Evidence as here stated. For as the miraculous Acts of Power recorded in the Bible were wrought for the Support and Accomplishment of a Dispensation full of *Goodness* and *Wisdom*, we have the same Proof that they were the Work of the *supreme God*, as we have, *that Nature is so*. 'Tis true, that in either Case, for aught we know, *inferior* or *subaltern* Beings may have been commissioned by the *Supreme*, as *immediate Agents*. But this Possibility, in either Case, can be a Matter of no Consequence to us, while it is manifest that the *delegated* Beings, whatever they might be, acted in full *Subserviency* to the *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Omnipotence* of the *one eternal God*.

V. To the noble Writer's Objection, "that, while we labour to unhinge Nature, "we bring Confusion on the World, and "destroy that Order from whence the one "infinite and perfect Principle is known^e;" — the Reply is easy and convincing. For while the supernatural Power is directed to advance the Happiness of Mankind, 'tis so

^e *Moral*. P. ii. § 5.

far from destroying any Principle from whence the one perfect Being is known ; that, on the contrary, it gives us still clearer and more satisfying Notices of the divine Providence. 'Tis allowed on all Hands, that there are Imperfections in the Creation : And tho' there may be, and doubtless are, good Reasons unknown to us, why these should not in every Instance be removed by a particular Exertion of supernatural Power ; yet when the divine Wisdom sees fit thus to interpose, for the further Advancement of his Creature's Happiness, can any thing be more irrational than to say, that " this is bringing Confusion on the " World?" The only Question is, Whether " *Happiness* shall be destroyed for the sake " of a pre-established *Law* ; or a pre-established *Law* be *suspended* for the sake of " *Happiness*?" In other Words, whether *Power* shall be subservient to *Goodness*, or *Goodness* yield to *Power* ? A Question which no sound *Theist* can be left at a Loss to answer. As therefore the Exertion of divine Power, *in Nature*, is for the Production of *Happiness* ; the *miraculous* Exertion of Power, for the further *Advancement* of Man's *Happiness*, is so far from " bring-
U " ing

ESSAY "altern Beings:" This vanishes at once
 III. with Regard to the *Christian* Dispensation,
 on the Evidence as here stated. For as the
 miraculous Acts of Power recorded in the
 Bible were wrought for the Support and
 Accomplishment of a Dispensation full of
Goodness and *Wisdom*, we have the same
 Proof that they were the Work of the *su-
 preme God*, as we have, *that Nature is so*.
 'Tis true, that in either Case, for aught
 we know, *inferior* or *subaltern* Beings may
 have been commissioned by the *Supreme*,
 as *immediate Agents*. But this Possibility,
 in either Case, can be a Matter of no Con-
 sequence to us, while it is manifest that the
delegated Beings, whatever they might be,
 acted in full *Subserviency* to the *Goodness*,
Wisdom, and *Omnipotence* of the *one eter-
 nal God*.

V. To the noble Writer's Objection,
 "that, while we labour to unhinge Nature,
 "we bring Confusion on the World, and
 "destroy that Order from whence the one
 "infinite and perfect Principle is known^g;"
 —the Reply is easy and convincing. For
 while the supernatural Power is directed to
 advance the Happiness of Mankind, 'tis so

^g *Moral*. P. ii. § 5.

far from destroying any Principle from ^{SECT.} whence the one perfect Being is known; _{IV.}

that, on the contrary, it gives us still clearer and more satisfying Notices of the divine Providence. 'Tis allowed on all Hands, that there are Imperfections in the Creation: And tho' there may be, and doubtless are, good Reasons unknown to us, why these should not in every Instance be removed by a particular Exertion of supernatural Power; yet when the divine Wisdom sees fit thus to interpose, for the further Advancement of his Creature's Happiness, can any thing be more irrational than to say, that "this is bringing Confusion on the "World?" The only Question is, Whether "*Happiness* shall be destroyed for the sake "of a pre-established *Law*; or a pre-established *Law* be *suspended* for the sake of "*Happiness*?" In other Words, whether *Power* shall be subservient to *Goodness*, or *Goodness* yield to *Power*? A Question which no sound *Theist* can be left at a Loss to answer. As therefore the Exertion of divine Power, *in Nature*, is for the Production of *Happiness*; the *miraculous* Exertion of Power, for the further *Advancement* of Man's *Happiness*, is so far from "bring-

U

"ing

ESSAY

III.

“ing Confusion on the World, either the
 “Chaos and Atoms of the *Atheists*, or the
 “Magick and Dæmons of the POLYTHE-
 “ISTS,” that it is even the clearest *Proof*,
 or *Revelation* of the DIVINITY.

VI. WITHOUT this apparent Subservi-
 ency to the Designs of Wisdom and Good-
 ness, all Accounts of miraculous Facts must
 be highly improbable. Because we have
 no Reason to believe that the Deity will
 ever counteract the established Laws of
 Nature; unless for the Sake of advancing
 the Happiness of his Creatures.

VII. ON this Account, most of the pre-
 tended Miracles recorded in the *Heathen*
 Story, are highly *improbable*. For it doth
 not appear, they were ever said to have
 been wrought in any *Series* or *Chain*: they
 never were *directed* to the Accomplishment
 of any *one End*, thro' *different Periods* of
 Time: Were frequently far from being
beneficent: Seldom accommodated even to
 any *rational Purpose*; but generally, mere
 pretended Acts of *arbitrary* and *unmeaning*
Power. Thus they are essentially distin-
 guished from the Scripture Miracles; and
 are utterly destitute of that INTERNAL
Evidence

Evidence which ariseth from an Union of SECT.
IV.
Design.

VIII. HENCE we may clearly discover the Reason, why the wiser Heathens ridiculed the *Jews*, even to a *Proverb*, for their extravagant Regard to *Miracles*. They knew their own to be *absurd* and *irrational*; this at once prevented them from enquiring into the real Nature of the *Jewish* Miracles; and at the same Time, led them to *deride* and *reject* these boasted *Wonders*, as being no better than their own.

IX. BUT on the Evidence as here stated, the Scripture Miracles become even *probable*, from the Circumstances under which they are recorded. As they are *beneficent*: As they were wrought thro' *different Periods* of Time in *Support* of *one* Dispensation full of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*: As it is highly improbable that this Dispensation could have been *completed* in all its immense *Variety* of *Circumstances* without such an immediate *Interposition* of divine *Power*.

X. AND now we shall plainly see the Reason why we reject the Accounts of Miracles given by Heathen Writers, while we believe the other Parts of their Story; and yet cannot reject the *Jewish* and *Chris-*

ESSAY *tian* Miracles, without rejecting at the same

III.

Time the whole History in which they are contained. For in the first Case, as the Miracles are *useless, unmeaning, and unconnected* with the rest of the Facts, it appears they are merely political. But the *Jewish* and *Christian* Miracles make an essential Part of the several Events related; they are strongly connected with this great HISTORY of PROVIDENCE, and are indeed *the very Means* by which *Providence* completed its gracious *Purpose*, “the Establishment of Christianity.” We cannot therefore reject these *miraculous* Accounts without rejecting all the *natural Events* with which they are thus intimately *interwoven*: And this we cannot do, without destroying every received Principle of Assent, and shaking the Faith of all ancient History.

I cannot conclude this Argument without transcribing a noble Passage from the Book of *Wisdom*, where several of these Truths are finely illustrated: And which may convince us, how just an Idea the JEWS entertained of *miraculous Interposition*, beyond what their Enemies have industriously represented. The Writer, after recounting the stupendous Chain of Miracles wrought

wrought for the Deliverance of the chosen People, concludes thus. "In all things, S E C T.
IV.

"O Lord, thou hast magnified and glorified thy People, and hast not despised to assist them in every Time and Place,—
 "For every Creature in its Kind was fashioned a-new, and served in their own Offices enjoined them, that thy Children might be kept without Hurt.—For the things of the Earth were changed into things of the Water, and the thing that did swim went upon the Ground. The Fire had Power in the Water, contrary to his own Virtue; and the Water forgot his own Kind to quench.— Thus the Elements were *changed* among themselves by a *Kind of Harmony*, as when one *Tune* is *changed* upon an *Instrument* of Music, and the *Melody still remaineth*,"

Thus he nobly expresseth the *Subserviency* of the *Elements* to the *divine Will*: And under the Image of a musical Instrument, which the skilful Master *tunes, changes, and directs* to the *one Purpose* of *Harmony*, he aptly and beautifully represents the *whole Creation* as an *Instrument* in the Hands of God, which he *orders, varies, and con-*

ESSAY *trouls*, to the *one unvary'd End* of HAPPINESS.
 III.

SECTION V.

SECT. HAVING vindicated the Scripture
 V. *Miracles* from the noble Writer's Objections; and shewn that they are so far from being *useless* or *absurd*, that the grand Scheme of Providence could neither have been *evidenced* nor *accomplished* without them; we have destroyed the chief Foundation on which his Lordship hath attempted to fix his Cavils against Christianity on another Subject; I mean, that of *Enthusiasm*; which naturally offers itself next to our Consideration. As this is the noble Writer's favourite Topic, we may reasonably expect to see him shine in it: And in one Respect indeed he does. He never touches on the Subject, but he riseth above himself: His Imagination kindles; he catches the Fire he describes; and his Page glows with all the Ardors of this high Passion.

It will, I presume, be unnecessary to make any Remarks on the large and eminent List of *Enthusiasts*, Poets, Orators, Heroes, Legislators, Musicians, and Philosophers,

sophers, which his Lordship cites from SECT. PLATO. He may call them *Enthusiasts*, if IV. it seem good to him; and may justly rank himself in the Number too, if by that Name be understood no more, than a Man of uncommon Strength or Warmth of Imagination; for this indeed is the requisite Foundation of Excellence, in any of the Characters here enumerated.

THE only Circumstance we are concerned *calmly* to examine, is that of *religious Enthusiasm*: Chiefly, to point out the essential Qualities and Characteristics which distinguish *this* from *divine Inspiration*: Hence to prove, that our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* were not *religious Enthusiasts*, as the noble Writer hath suggested.

'Tis indeed, as his Lordship observes, "a great Work to judge of Spirits, whether they be of God." We shall willingly join him in this Principle too, "that in order to this End, we must antecedently judge our own Spirit, whether it be of Reason or sound Sense, free of every byassing Passion, every giddy Vapour, or melancholy Fume. This is the first Knowledge, and previous Judgment; to understand ourselves, and know what

U 4

" Spirit

ESSAY
III.

“ Spirit we are of. Afterwards we may
 “ judge the Spirit in others, consider what
 “ their personal Merit is, and prove the Va-
 “ lidity of their Testimony by the Solidity
 “ of their Brain.” On this Principle then
 let the Cause be determined.

IN examining this Subject, therefore, we
 shall find, First, that in *some* Respects, *En-
 thusiasm* must, from it's Nature, always re-
 semble *divine Inspiration*. Secondly, that
 in others it hath generally attempted a fur-
 ther Resemblance, but hath always betrayed
 itself. Thirdly, that in other Circum-
 stances it is diametrically opposite to divine
 Inspiration, and void even of all seeming
 Resemblance.

FIRST, *Enthusiasm* must, from it's very
 Nature, in some Respects always resemble
 divine *Inspiration*. They both have the
Deity for their Object; and consequently
 must both be attended with a devout Turn
 of Mind. They must both be subject to
 strong and unusual Impressions; the one
supernatural; the other *præternatural*, that
 is, beyond the ordinary Efforts of Nature,
 tho' really produced by Nature; *these*, thro'
 their uncommon Force, will often resemble,
 and not easily be distinguished from *those*
 which

which are the real Effect of *supernatural* SECT. V.
Power. This Circumstance deserves a particular Attention: For these two Qualities which are common to both, have induced many to reject the very Notion of divine Inspiration, as mere Enthusiasm. Whereas we see, that, supposing such a thing as divine *Inspiration*, it cannot but resemble *Enthusiasm* in these two Characters.

BUT tho' it were strange, if *Counterfeits* did not hit off some Features of their genuine *Originals*; yet it were more strange, if they should be able to adopt them all, by such a perfect Imitation as to prevent their being detected.

THERE are, therefore, secondly, other Circumstances in which *Enthusiasm* hath generally attempted a further Resemblance of divine *Inspiration*, but in these hath always betrayed itself *spurious*.

The first of this Kind is, "A Pretence
"to, and Persuasion of the Power of work-
"ing *Miracles*." This Persuasion must needs be natural to the Enthusiast; because he imagines himself in all things highly favoured of Heaven: The Notion of a Communication of *divine Power* will therefore be among the chief of his *Deliriums*.

ESSAY In this the Enthusiast hath been detected,
 III. sometimes by the *Absurdity* of the Miracle attempted, *always* by his *Inability* to perform what he proposed. There is scarce an *Absurdity* so great, but what hath some Time or other been aimed at by Enthusiasts, in the Way of miraculous Power. Their Attempts have ever been void of all *rational Intention*, void of *Beneficence*, void of *common Discernment*: And hence manifestly the Effects of a heated Imagination. That they have always failed in their Attempts is no less known. But these are Truths so willingly allowed by the Enemies of Religion, that we need not enlarge on them. On the contrary, we have seen, the Miracles of the Gospel are *rational*, *beneficent*, *united* in one great *End*; performed before *Numbers*, before *Enemies*; recorded by *Eye-Witnesses*. His Lordship indeed objects or insinuates, that the Testimony even of Eye-Witnesses cannot in this Case be a Foundation for Assent, unless we know them to have been “ free both from any “ particular Enthusiasm, and a general Turn “ to Melancholy.” But with Regard to the Miracles of the Gospel, we know that many were converted by them, from their former
 Prejudices ;

Prejudices; and therefore could not possibly be under the Influence of the *Christian* Enthusiasm, supposing it such. And as to their being free from *Melancholy*; for this we may safely appeal to the rational and consistent Accounts given by the sacred Penmen. Melancholy and Enthusiasm must ever produce inconsistent Visions. For a Proof that the Scripture Miracles are not of this Nature, we appeal to what hath been already said on this Subject in the preceeding Section.

BUT there is *one* miraculous Gift, *the Gift of Tongues*, which hath more generally been supposed the peculiar Effect of Inspiration. We have an Account of this Kind recorded in holy Writⁱ. And this Account the noble Writer hath thought it expedient to turn to Ridicule; by representing this supposed miraculous Gift, as the mere Effect of strong *Melancholy*, and natural *Inebriation*. To this Purpose, having observed from Dr. MORE, that “the Vapours and
“Fumes of Melancholy partake of the Nature of Wine;” he adds, “One might
“conjecture from hence, that the malicious
“Opposers of early Christianity were not un-

ⁱ Acts ii.

“ versed

ESSAY
III.

“ versed in this Philosophy ; when they sophistically objected against the apparent Force of the divine Spirit speaking in divers Languages, and attributed it *to the Power of new Wine*^k.” Agreeably to this insinuated Charge, he tells us of “ A Gentleman who has writ lately in Defence of revived Prophecy, and has since fallen himself into the prophetic Ecstasies.” The noble Writer adds, “ I saw him lately under an *Agitation* (as they call it) uttering Prophecy in a pompous *Latin Style*, of which, out of his Ecstasy, it seems, *he is wholly incapable*^l.”

HERE we may see, how ready some People are to strain at a *Gnat*, and yet swallow a *Camel*. The noble Writer ridicules the Gift of Tongues from *divine Inspiration*, as absurd and impossible : Yet he believes, you see, or *affects* to believe, that this Man could speak *Latin* by the sole Force of *Imagination* and *Enthusiasm*. A compendious Method this, of learning Languages ! I have somewhere met with a very rational Remark, That whereas it was charged by FESTUS upon St. PAUL, “ that *Learning* had made him *mad*,” this No-

^k *Misc.* ii. § 2.

^l *Lett. on Enth.* § 6.

tion inverts the Charge; for thus “*Mad-* S E C T.
“*ness* may make a Man *learned*.” V.

BUT leaving his Lordship's Admirers to determine which is the greater Miracle, a *Gift* of Tongues from *God*, or a Gift of Tongues from *Melancholy*; 'tis our Part to shew the essential Characters of Distinction between the *Reality* of *one*, and the *Pretences* of the *other*. Now this will appear most evident, if we compare them, both in their *Manner*, and their *End*. As to the *Manner* of this *new prophecying Sect*, the noble Writer himself tells us, it was that of *Ecstasy* and *Convulsion*; and that he saw this Gentleman under an *Agitation* when he had the *Gift of Tongues*. As to the *End* pretended in this miraculous *Gift*; it appears there was really *none*: For the *pompous Latin Style* was uttered among a People who, in general, understood the *English Language only*: It could therefore serve to no *rational Purpose*. On the contrary, it appears that the miraculous Gift of Tongues conferred on the Apostles, was *rational* both in it's *Manner* and it's *End*. There is not the least Hint of it's having been attended with *Ecstasies* or *Convulsions*; nay, it appears from
the

ESSAY
III.

the Account, that it could not have been so attended: And from the *Occasion* it appears how proper it was, with Regard to its *End*. The Recital is noble and rational: Let it answer for itself. “And there were
“dwelling at Jerusalem, JEWS, devout
“Men out of *every Nation* under Heaven.—
“And they were all amazed, and marvelled,
“saying one to another, Behold, are not
“all these which speak, *Galileans*? And
“how hear we *every Man* in our own *Tongue*,
“wherein we were born? *Parthians*, and
“*Medes*, and *Elamites*, the Dwellers in *Me-*
“*sopotamia*, and in *Judea*, and *Cappadocia*,
“in *Pontus* and *Asia*, *Phrygia* and *Pam-*
“*phylia*, in *Egypt*, and in the Parts of *Libya*
“about *Cyrene*: And Strangers of *Rome*;
“*Jews* and *Profelytes*, *Cretes* and *Arabians*;
“we do hear them speak in our *Tongues*
“*the wonderful Works of God*!” How just
an Effort of divine Power! which should
at once give *Instruction* to those who most
wanted it; and be the *natural Means* of
conveying and *dispersing* the glad Tydings
of the *Gospel*, to *every Nation under Heaven*!—
It should seem probable, therefore, that the
Men who “mocked and said, these Men are
“full of new Wine,” were the *Natives of*
Judea.

Judea. For PETER, we find, immediately S E C T.
V.
arose, and addressed himself to these in particular. “Ye Men of *Judea*,” &c. And it was natural for them to entertain this Suspicion; because they neither understood what the Apostles uttered, nor could imagine how they should obtain a Knowledge of so many various Tongues. They must, therefore, naturally suspect, that the Apostles were uttering *unmeaning Sounds*: And this they regarded as the Effect of *Wine*.

ANOTHER remarkable Circumstance, in which Enthusiasts have often pretended to resemble the divinely inspired, is “the Gift of Prophecy.” Which, indeed, is no more than another Kind of Miracle. In this too, Enthusiasm hath always betrayed itself. First, and principally, with regard to the Event. The frequent Attempts of this Kind, and their perpetual *Failure*, need not here be enumerated: They are known sufficiently. This cannot be charged on the *Apostles* with the least Appearance of Reason: For it is a Gift they hardly ever pretended to. Our *Saviour* indeed foretold many and great Events—the Defection of PETER; his own Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension; the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the Persecution

ESSAY
III.

Persecution of his Disciples, the Propagation of his Religion among the Gentiles, the approaching Miseries and final Destruction of *Jerusalem*. Now all these Events were clearly accomplished: So far, therefore, are they from proving him an *Enthusiast*, that they demonstrate him possessed of *divine Fore-Knowledge*.

BUT besides the *Event*, there is a notable Circumstance in the *Manner*, which hath ever distinguished *real* from *pretended*, *true* from *false* Prophecy: And which the noble Writer's groundless Affirmations have made it necessary to insist on.

HE says, "I find by present Experience, " as well as by all Histories sacred and prophane, that the Operation of this Spirit " is every where the *same* as to the *bodily* " *Organ*^m." In Confirmation of this he cites a Passage from the Gentleman who was subject to the prophetic Ecstasies, which informs us " that the ancient Prophets had " the Spirit of God upon them under Ecstacy, with divers strange Gestures of Body " denominating them Madmen (or Enthusiasts) as appears evidently, says he, in " the Instances of *Balaam*, *Saul*, *David*,

^m *Let. on Enth.* § 6.

" *Ezekiel*,

“ *Ezekiel, Danielⁿ,*” &c. And he adds, SECT.
V.
the Gentleman “ proceeds to justify this by
“ the Practice of the apostolic Times, and
“ by the Regulation which the Apostle
“ himself applies to these seemingly irregu-
“ lar Gifts^o.” In this Instance it is not
unpleasant to observe the different Views of
his Lordship, and the Gentleman he refers
to, in their Endeavours to establish this
pretended Fact. The *one* was zealous to
fix a Resemblance between the *old* and the
new prophetic Manner, in order to strengthen
the Credit of the *revived* Prophecy: The
other's Intention plainly was, by that very
Resemblance, which he was willing should
pass for *real*, to destroy the Credit of the
Scripture Prophecies, well knowing that the
other deserved none.

BUT so it happens, that the noble Wri-
ter's Friend proves as bad an *Historian*, as
he was a *Prophet*: And fails as miserably
in relating *past* Events, as in foretelling
future. The Truth is, that both his Lord-
ship and the Gentleman seem to have been
in a *Fit of Enthusiasm*, and have therefore
been induced to mingle a little *pious Fraud*,
thro' a Zeal for their respective *Theories*.

^a *Ib.* ^o *Ib.*

X

For

ESSAY
III. For in Reality, this pretended Resemblance is utterly fictitious. There is not the least Hint in Scripture, that any of the Persons mentioned as true Prophets, were ever subject to these *Ecstatic, convulsive* Motions, which the enthusiastic Gentleman and his Tribe were always seized with. As to the Regulation made by the Apostle PAUL; whoever consults the Place ^p will find, there is no Mention made of *Ecstasies, Convulsions*, or extraordinary *bodily Motions*. And 'tis clear, that our Saviour always delivered his Prophecies on every *incidental* Occasion, under all the *common Circumstances* of human Life; *calm, serene*, and with *unaffected Deliberation*. So that the whole Charge is a bold, continued Falsehood, void of Truth, and even the Appearance of it.

INDEED, from the Instances which the noble Writer cites from VIRGIL and LIVY, 'tis evident that the old *beaten Pretenders* to Prophecy were affected in the same *convulsive* Manner, as the *modern Christian Enthusiasts*. His Lordship might have cited twenty more from ancient Writers. And what can be rationally inferred from them? What but this— “ That this *convulsive*

^p 1 *Corinth.* ch. xiv.

“ *Agitation*

“ *Agitation* of the bodily Organs is a Cir- S E C T.
V.
 “ cumstance that effectually *betrays Enth-*
 “ *iasm*; and distinguisheth it from the real
 “ *Inspirations* recorded in *holy Writ*.”

THESE are the Circumstances in which Enthusiasm will generally *seem* to resemble real Inspiration: tho' on a nearer Scrutiny, these very Circumstances will always *detect* it. We come now to enumerate those other Qualities peculiar to Enthusiasm, in which it bears no Resemblance to divine Inspiration, and in which they are, at first View, clearly distinguished from each other. And here it is remarkable, that, as the noble Writer *dwells* on the *former*, so he scarce ever *touches* on these following Characters of *clear distinction*. This peculiar Conduct can hardly be judged *accidental*: For a Man of Wit can easily improve a *partial* Resemblance into a *complete* one: But to have added other *Features*, of absolute *Dissimilarity*, would have weakened the *Likeness*, and consequently have disgraced the *intended Representation*.

THE chief Qualities, which clearly, and at first View, distinguish *Enthusiasm* from divine *Inspiration*, I find enumerated by the

ESSAY fine Writer of *the Letter on St. Paul's Conversion*. These are, "*Heat of Temper, Melancholy, Credulity, Self-Conceit, and Ignorance.*" So far as these relate to St. PAUL, the Reader is referred to the excellent Work here cited. 'Tis our Part to consider them as they may affect our Saviour, and the rest of his Apostles. And a brief Consideration may suffice: For all (except the last) are so repugnant to their Characters, that the very Mention of them refutes the Imputation.

WITH REGARD to the first of these Qualities, "*uncommon Heat of Temper,*" 'tis of all others most abhorrent from our Saviour's Character. He is every where sedate, cool, and unmoved, even under the most bitter Circumstances of Provocation^a: He every where appears a perfect Model of Benevolence, Meekness, and mild Majesty. The same Temper generally prevails among his Apostles: More particularly we may observe of the *Evangelists*, who are the *immediate Evidences*, that in their Writings they discover the most perfect *Coolness*. Had they been of a fiery Disposition, they had

^a See Dr. Law's *Life of Christ*: Where his Character is described at large.

not failed to load the Enemies of their ^{SECT.}
crucified Lord, with the bitterest *Sarcasms*. ^{V.}

WITH as little Reason can *Melancholy* be charged on the Founders of Christianity. Our *Saviour* came, “eating and drinking:” So entirely *open, unreserved, and social*, that he was branded by his Enemies, as a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*. Another Circumstance, besides the Passion for *Solitude*, hath ever distinguished *Melancholy*: That is, “an *Over-Fondness* and *Desire* to *suffer* “in the apprehended Cause of Truth, beyond the just and rational *Ends of Suffering*.” Now this is diametrically opposite to the Character of our Saviour and his Apostles: For even JESUS himself was in an *Agony* at the Apprehension of his approaching Sufferings. So far were his Disciples from being tainted with this Melancholy, that they discovered *unmanly Fear*; for *they all forsook him and fled*. ’Tis true, they afterwards endured the severest Trials with unshaken Constancy; yet still, with the *resigned Spirit of Martyrs*; not the *Eagerness* and *fanatic Vaunts* of all known *Enthusiasts*^r.

^r For a remarkable Instance of this, see a Story relating to SAVANOROLA. *Charact. Misc.* ii. c. i. in the Notes.

ESSAY
III.

THE Charge of *Credulity* hath no better Foundation. To our Saviour himself it is in it's very Nature utterly *inapplicable*. His Disciples have been often charged with *Credulity*. But on impartial Examination it will appear, that the Charge is groundless. For this is an unvarying Circumstance in the Credulity of an Enthusiast "that it never "admits a Doubt." But it is evident from the united Accounts of the Gospel-History that they often, nay always *doubted* of our Saviour's *Death*, tho' himself foretold it. 'Tis equally evident, they not only doubted of, but almost disbelieved his Resurrection, till overcome by irresistible Evidence. These Circumstances afford another collateral Proof, that the Apostles were not Enthusiasts: Because it is essentially of the Nature of Enthusiasm, "to run on headlong in the *open* "Channel of the *First conceived Opinion*." Now 'tis evident, they *changed* their *first Opinion* concerning the *temporal* Dominion of CHRIST, into the firm Belief of his *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *spiritual* Kingdom: We cannot therefore justly charge them with that *Credulity*, which is the Characteristic of *Enthusiasm*.*

*See this Point treated with great Particularity of
THE

THE next Circumstance, *Self-Conceit*, SECT.
V. which hath ever been one of the most distinguishing Qualities of Enthusiasm, is so distant from the Character of JESUS and his *Apostles*, that it hath never, I believe, been laid to their Charge. The Enthusiast is perpetually boasting of immediate *Converse* and *Communication* with the *Deity*; and overflows with a Contempt of all, who are not of his own System. In our Saviour we discover the most unfeigned *Humility* and *Compassion* towards all Men. When urged to shew his *Pretensions* to a divine Mission, so far is he from resolving them into *inward Feelings*, *Impulses*, or *Notices* from God (the constant Practice of every Enthusiast) that, on the contrary, he calmly appeals to his Works and Doctrines^t; adding, in a Strain the *Reverse* of all *Enthusiasm*, that “in what we bear Witness only to
“ourselves, our Witness cannot be established as a Truth^v.” The same Turn of Mind appears in the Apostles. They affect no Superiority themselves, nor express or

Proof, in a Pamphlet intitled, “*A Discourse proving that the Apostles were no Enthusiasts.*” By A. Campbell, S. T. P.

^t Mat. vii. 16.

^v John v. 31.

ESSAY discover any Contempt or *spiritual Pride*
 III. with Regard to others.

THE last Quality common to Enthusiasts, is that of *Ignorance*. This hath been sometimes charged on our Saviour himself: often on his Apostles with an Air of Triumph. But so it is, that *seeming Objections* against Truth become often the *strongest Evidence* in Support of it. This will eminently appear in the present Case, if we consider “that Ignorance or Want of Letters, when “joined with Enthusiasm, must always “produce the most *inconsistent* Visions, “*whimsical* Conduct, and *pernicious* Doctrines.” These Effects, *Ignorance* and *Enthusiasm* have wrought wherever they appeared, in every Age and Nation. Nor can it indeed be otherwise: For a *lettered* Enthusiast may be supposed to have an *internal Balance*, which must in some Degree *counteract* and *regulate* his Visions; while the *unlettered* is subject to no Controul, but must become the Sport and Prey to the *delirious* Flights of an *unreined Imagination*.

Now, that the Apostles and Evangelists were *unlearned*, must needs be granted: And tho’ the noble Writer hath taken upon him to deride them on this Account; yet
 this

this very Circumstance, compared with their S E C T.
V.
Conduct and Writings, clears them at once from the Charge of Enthusiasm. So far were they from the *Ravings* of this Passion, common to all *ignorant* Enthusiasts, that we may defy the Enemies of *Christianity* to produce any Instance either of Speech or Practice, that hath the smallest Tincture of *Extravagance*. Their Conduct was regular and exemplary; their Words were *the Words of Truth and Soberness*.

As to the Charge of Ignorance against our Saviour, the Enemies of Christianity have been more *cautious*: Yet it hath been insinuated. And indeed, that he had not the common Aids of *human Learning*, is not only *acknowledged*, but *insisted* on. Could *ignorant* and *blind Enthusiasm* then have produced the sublime *religious Doctrines* and *moral Precepts* which the Evangelists have recorded from his Mouth? With as much Truth it might be affirmed that the *Creation* is the Produce of *Chance*. With Reason then may we ask the noble Writer this Question, “Whence then had this Man
“ *such Wisdom*, seeing he spake as never Man
“ spake?” And the Answer sure is *one* only,
“ That as it was not from *Man*, it must
“ have

ESSAY III. "have been from God." For even the Enemies of Christianity have born Witness to it's Excellence, even when they intended to disgrace it: While with fruitless Labour they have attempted to prove, "that the most exalted *Truths* and *Precepts* of the *Gospel* may be found scattered among the Writings of the *heathen Sages*."

FROM these concurrent Circumstances, therefore, we obtain a full *internal Proof*, that the *Founders of Christianity* were not *Enthusiasts*, as the noble Writer hath, by the most laboured and repeated Insinuations, attempted to represent them.

SECTION VI.

SECT. VI. SINCE therefore we have appealed to the *religious* and *Moral Doctrines* of *Christianity*, as a concurrent Proof of it's *divine Original*; it will be necessary now to examine what the noble Writer hath alleged or suggested against this most *essential* Part of our Religion.

AND first, it appears from the general Turn of the *Characteristics*, that the noble Author regards *religious Establishments* as being quite at a distance from *Philosophy*
and

and *Truth*, with which, he tells us, in ancient Times they never interfered: He therefore

SECT.
VI.

derides every Attempt to make them *coalesce*. Thus he tells us, "Not only *Visionaries* and *Enthusiasts* of all Kinds were "tolerated by the Ancients; but, on the "other Side, Philosophy had as free a "Course, and was permitted as a Balance "against Superstition.—Thus Matters were "happily balanced; Reason had fair Play; "Learning and Science flourished. Wonderful was the Harmony and Temper "which arose from all these *Contrarieties*." Such therefore being his Lordship's Idea of a *public Religion*, which he ever opposes to *private Opinion* and Philosophy; 'tis no Wonder he should insinuate the Folly of Christianity, which promiseth to all it's *Pro-felytes*, "that they shall know the *Truth*, "and the Truth shall make them *free*."

BUT notwithstanding the noble Writer's Partiality to the System of ancient Paganism, which he had deeply imbibed from his familiar Converse with ancient Writers; no unprejudiced Mind can hesitate a Moment, in determining the superior Excellence of the *Christian Religion*, compared with these

" *Let. on Enthus.*

well-

ESSAY *well-meant, but defective Schemes of heathen*
 III. *Policy.* For, as gross Error, and Misapprehension of the divine Nature and Attributes, was deeply interwoven with ancient Paganism; so, 'tis well known, that in Fact, the most horrid Enormities were committed *upon Principle*, under the Authority and Example of their pretended Gods. Lord SHAFTESBURY himself owns, what indeed it were Folly to deny, that the *Imitation* of the *Deity* is a *powerful Principle* of Action*. If so, it follows, that to communicate a just Idea of the divine Perfections to all Mankind, must tend to *secure* their *Virtue*, and *promote* their *Happiness*. 'Tis therefore equally *ungenerous* and *impolitic*, to suffer Mankind to live in *Ignorance* and *Idolatry*. Hence 'tis evident, that *Reformations* in Religion are not the ridiculous Things his Lordship would represent them; and that *Christianity*, if indeed it *reveals* the *Truth*, is a Religion in it's Tendency much more *beneficial* to Mankind than ancient *Paganism*.

'TIS no difficult Task to assign the original Cause of this so different and even *opposite Genius* of the *pagan* Systems from that

* *Enq. on Virtue.*

of *Christianity*. In early and ignorant Ages, the Necessity of religious Belief and religious Establishments was seen by the Leaders of Mankind: On this Account they instituted the most *salutary* Forms and Doctrines, which their unexperienced Reason could suggest. As Nations grew wiser and more polished, they saw the Weakness and Absurdity of these established Systems; but thro' a Regard, and perhaps a *mistaken* one, to the *public Good*, were unwilling to discover these Defects and Absurdities to the People. Hence probably the Rise of *exoteric* and *esoteric* Doctrines. For the furthest that human Policy dared to go, was to reveal the Truth to a *few initiated*: While the Bulk of Mankind, even in the *wisest* and *politest* Ages, continued the *Dupes* to the *Prejudices* and *Superstitions* of the most *ignorant* ones. On the contrary, it was a main Design of the Christian Dispensation, to dispel this Cloud of Ignorance, which excluded Mankind from all Participation of *divine Truth*; to reveal those just and sublime Ideas of the *Divinity*, which are the noblest, as they are the surest Foundation, not only of *Piety* but of *Morals*: And which, so far as they can affect either

Piety

ESSAY
III.

Piety or Morals (such is the Triumph of *Christianity* over the laboured Researches of *false Wisdom*) are no less *intelligible* to the *Peasant* than the *Philosopher*. On this Account, *Christianity* was perfect (*relatively* perfect) in it's first Delineation: All Attempts to change or add to its Doctrines, have but discovered their own Absurdity: And Experience every Day more and more convinceth us, that the only Method of obtaining a pure and uncorrupt System of practical Religion and moral Precepts, is to search for them in the uncommented Pages of the Gospel.

THUS, what was the Effect of *Necessity* among the *Heathens*, the noble Writer very partially attributes to *Choice*: He mistakes a *Defect* for an *Excellence*: And blindly prefers the Weakness of *Man*, to the Wisdom of *God*.

ANOTHER Cavil frequently urged or insinuated by his Lordship against *Christianity*, seems to have been the natural Consequence of the last-mentioned. He much admires the Pagan Religions, as having been *sociable*, and mutually *incorporated* into each other: And often represents *Christianity*, as of an *unsociable*, *surly*, and *solitary* Complexion, tending

tending to *destroy* every other but itself. The Consequence of this, he tells us, hath been
 “ a new Sort of Policy, which extends it-
 “ self to another World, and hath made us
 “ leap the Bounds of natural Humanity;
 “ and out of a *supernatural Charity*, has
 “ taught us the Way of plaguing one an-
 “ other most devoutly.” Now with Regard
 to this pretended *unsociable* Temper of
Christianity; it must be owned indeed, that
 our Religion tends to swallow up and de-
 stroy every other, in the same Manner as
Truth in every Subject tends to destroy
Falsehood: That is, by *rational Conviction*.
 The same Objection might be urged against
 the *Newtonian Philosophy*, which destroyed
 the *Cartesian Fables*: Or against the *Coper-
 nican System*, because the clumsy *Visions* of
Ptolemy and *Tycho-Brake* vanished before it.
 The same may be urged against the Use-
 fulness, of the great *Source of Day*, because
 it *dims* and *extinguishes* every inferior Lustre:
 For the glimmering Lamps of human Know-
 ledge, lighted up by the Philosophers,
 served indeed to conduct them as *a Light
 shining in a dark Place*; but these must
 naturally be sunk in a superior Lustre, when

¶ *Lett. on Entbus.*

the

ESSAY *the Sun of Righteousness should arise.* The
III. Gospel therefore is so far *unsociable*, as to discredit *Error*; and is incompatible with *this*, as *Light* with *Darkness*: But not so *unsociable*, as to *compel* the erroneous. As to the religious Debates, then, which Christianity hath occasioned, and the Wars and Massacres consequent upon them, which the noble Writer so justly detests; Christianity stands clear of the Charge, till it can be shewn that it countenanceth the inhuman Principle of Intolerance: And this, its bitterest Enemies can never do. 'Tis true, that if we be so irrational as to take our Idea of Christianity from the Representations of Enthusiasts and Bigots, nothing can appear more absurd and mischievous: As, in like Manner, if we consider the *Heavens* under the perplexed Revolutions and malignant Aspects of the old Astronomers and Astrologers, nothing can be more unworthy either of divine Wisdom or Goodness. But how can these false *Images* affect the noble *Simplicity*, and *Benignity* of the *Gospel*, or the *Solar System*? To the *Works* and the *Word* of God, we must repair, for a true Idea of their undisguised Perfection: And there we shall read their divine Author, in
the

the brightest Characters of Wisdom and Goodness. So far therefore is Christianity from encouraging Wars and Massacres, on Account of a Difference in Opinion, that its divine Founder hath expressly warned his Followers against the Suggestions of this horrid Temper^z: Nor can these fatal Consequences ever arise among *Christians*, till they have divested themselves of *Christian Charity*, and ^a mistaken the very Principles of their Profession.

BUT the noble Writer proceeds to still more bitter Invectives, if possible, against *Christianity*. For he often insinuates, that the Prospect of Happiness and Misery in another Life, revealed in the Gospel, tends to the Destruction of all *true Virtue*^b. Indeed we cannot much wonder that his Lordship should treat Christianity in this Manner, when we consider what he hath thrown out against Religion in general, in this respect. These Cavils have already been considered at large: Whatever therefore he hath insinuated against our Religion in *particular*, will naturally be refer'd to, and effectually be refuted by these more *general* Observations^c. However, there are

^z *Luke* ix. ^a *Ib.* ^b *Wit and H.* p. ii. § 3. ^c See above, *Ess.* ii. § 9.

two or three Passages on this Subject so remarkable, that they may seem to deserve a separate Consideration.

AFTER having ridiculed and branded Christianity, as destroying the *disinterested* Part of Virtue, he tells us “ The *Jews* as well as Heathens were left to their Philosophy to be instructed in the sublime Part of Virtue, and induced by *Reason* to that which was never enjoined them by Command. No Premium or Penalty being enforced in these Cases, the disinterested Part subsisted, the Virtue was a free Choice, and the Magnanimity of the Act was left intire^d.”

HERE, again, the noble Writer hath got to his *Peculiarities*. What other Title this Passage may deserve, we shall soon discover. For, first, supposing his Assertion true, what he notes in the *Jewish* and *Heathen* Religions as an *Excellence*, had certainly been a *Defect*. For are not *Hottentots*, wild *Indians*, and *Arabs*, “ left to their Philosophy, to be induced by Reason to that which was never enjoined them by Command? No Premium or Penalty

^d *Wit and H.* p. ii. § 3.

“ being inforced in these Cases, the disinterested Part subsists, the Virtue is a free Choice, and the Magnanimity of the Act is left entire.” Thus the noble Writer would again debase us into Savages^e; and, rather than not disgrace Christianity, would put the State of *Palestine*, *Greece*, and *Rome*, on a Level with that of the *Cape of Good Hope*: *Blindly* (or shall we say, *knowingly*?) disparaging, what he elsewhere so justly applauds, “ Laws, Constitutions, civil and RELIGIOUS Rites, whatever *civilizes* or *polishes* rude Mankind^f.”

BUT in Fact, neither the JEWS nor *civilized Heathens* were ever tainted with this *Phrenzy*. They saw the Necessity of religious Belief; and as they saw its Necessity, so they inforced it. With regard to the JEWS, the noble Writer contradicts himself within the Compass of ten Lines: For there he says, “ their Religion taught no future State, nor exhibited any Rewards or Punishments, *besides such as were temporal*.” This is the very Truth. Here then he owns a *temporal Sanction* of Premium and Penalty, *Reward* and *Punishment*: Yet in the Passage above cited, and

^e See above, *Essay* ii. § 10. ^f *Moralists*, Part i. § 3.

ESSAY which stands close by the other in the Original, he says, "there was no Premium
 III. "or Penalty enforced, no Reward or Punishment!" His Lordship deals as *fairly* and *consistently* by the civilized Heathens: For, could he indeed have forgot the distinguished Rank, which, in the *Elysian Fields*, was assigned to those who *fell* to save *their Country*?

*Hic Manus ob PATRIAM pugnando vulnera passi—
 Omnibus his nivea cinguntur tempora vitta* §.

AND now let the Impartial determine, whether the noble Writer's Observation hath more of *Sagacity* or of *Truth* in it.

BUT the Christian Doctrines relating to an *hereafter*, are to undergo a yet severer *Inquisition* from the noble Writer: They are to be tortured and *mangled* on the *Rack*, of *Wit* shall I say, or of *Buffoonry*? "The
 "Misfortune is, we are seldom taught to
 "comprehend this SELF, by placing it in
 "a distinct View from its Representative
 "or *Counterfeit*. In our *holy* Religion,
 "which, for the greatest Part, is adapted to
 "the very meanest Capacities, 'tis not to
 "be expected that a Speculation of this

§ *Eneid.* lib. vi.

" Kind,

" Kind should be openly advanced. 'Tis S E C T.
VI.
 " enough that we have Hints given us of a
 " *nobler* SELF, than that which is commonly
 " supposed the Basis and Foundation of our
 " Actions. *Self-Interest* is there taken as it
 " is vulgarly conceived — In the same Man-
 " ner as the celestial Phænomena are in
 " the sacred Volumes generally treated ac-
 " cording to common Imagination, and the
 " then current System of Astronomy and
 " natural Science; so the moral Appear-
 " ances are in many Places preserved
 " without Alteration, according to *Vulgar*
 " *Prejudice*. — Our real and genuine *Self*
 " is sometimes supposed that *ambitious* one,
 " which is fond of Power and Glory; some-
 " times that *childish* one, which is taken
 " with *vain Shew*, and is to be invited to
 " Obedience by Promise of *finer Habitations*,
 " *precious Stones*, and *Metals*, shining Gar-
 " ments, Crowns, and other such *dazling*
 " *Beauties*, by which another Earth, or
 " material City is represented^h."

THIS Passage contains two insinuated
 Charges of a very different Nature. The
 one is *true*, but no *Objection*: The other
 would indeed be an *Objection*, but that it is

^h *Solil.* Part iii. § 1.

ESSAY
III.

absolutely *groundless*. 'Tis true " that our
 " Religion is for the greatest Part adapted
 " to the very meanest Capacities; and that
 " the celestial Phænomena are in the sacred
 " Volumes generally treated according to
 " *common Imagination*," &c. And would
 the noble Writer indeed have had it other-
 wise? Would he indeed have had them
 spoken of, according to the Philosophical
 Construction of the Universe, rather than
 the received Notions of Mankind? With
 how little Reason, we may soon be con-
 vinced, if we consider, First, that the *End*
 of *Revelation* was not to make Mankind
 Proficients in Philosophy, since the Situa-
 tion of the Generality can never admit it:
 And had the Scriptures supposed this, (as
 indeed such a Conduct would have supposed
 it) this very Circumstance had been an
 Argument of their Falseness. Secondly,
 even Philosophers themselves, tho' inti-
 mately acquainted with the Construction of
 the Universe, do still *descend* to the *Level*
 of *Mankind*, when they speak of the Phæ-
 nomena of Nature: The *Sun sets* and *rises*,
 as it did three thousand Years ago: The
Moon changes, *waxes*, is *new*, and *old*:
 The *Stars* are *in the Firmament*, the *Sun*
 still

still *rules the Day*, and the *Moon the Night*. S E C T.
VI.
 The Reason is evident: Because *astronomical Discoveries* have not the least Influence on the *Practice of Mankind*: Because, altho' the *natural Appearances* of things are merely *relative* to the *Imagination only*, yet they are, for that very Reason, necessary to be referred to, as the *Imagination* is the great *universal Instrument* of *Life* and human *Action*.

AN Objection therefore to the Scriptures on this Account, betrays either a gross *Misapprehension* of human Nature, or the most unpardonable *Insincerity*; yet we find Objections of this kind frequently urged: as if, because the sacred Penmen were empowered by God to reveal to us a certain Measure of *religious* and *moral* Truth, suited to our present State, they must therefore be endued with *Omniscience*; in order to make all Men not only *good Subjects*, but good *Astronomers* too!

BUT tho' it were *Folly* to object against the *sacred Penmen*, because they appear not to have been *omniscient*; yet I cannot conclude this Argument, without producing a remarkable Instance, wherein their very *Ignorance* of these *speculative* and *unnecessary*

ESSAY III. *Truths* becomes a convincing Proof of their
 VERACITY: A Circumstance which much more nearly concerns us. We read in the Book of *Joshua*, “ And he said in the Sight “ of *Israel*, SUN, stay thou in *Gibeon*, and “ *thou* MOON, in the Valley of *Ajalon*: “ And the *Sun* abode, and THE MOON “ STOOD STILL,—and hasted not to go “ down for a whole Dayⁱ.” Here, the *standing still* of these Luminaries is related in such a Manner as concurs with the common Appearances of things; and yet consists with the best Discoveries in Astronomy, tho’ unknown to the Writer. For we are now assured that, if *the Sun stood still*, it must have been by suspending the diurnal Rotation of the Earth: The *standing still of the Moon* was therefore the *necessary Consequence*. This the Writer appears not to have known: Yet he relates the *Fact*, tho’ it was of no Importance with Regard to that Event for which the Miracle was wrought. It is therefore of singular Force in proving the *Veracity of the Writer*, because, had it not been true in Fact, it is a *Circumstance which could never have occur’d to him*.

THE noble Writer’s other Charge relating to the *moral Representations* of the

ⁱ *Joshua* x.

Scriptures,

Scriptures, would indeed be of Weight, if it were founded in Truth: But so far from this, that he hath utterly *reversed* the Fact. For in Reality, these *sensible* Representations of *visible* Beauty and Glory, are only *occasionally* or *accidentally* hinted; while the whole *Weight* and *Energy* of the *Gospel* is employed in inforcing the Idea of *moral Perfection*, of our *nobler SELF*, of *Self-Interest* in the *higher* Sense, of the Necessity of extirpating every meaner Passion, and cherishing the great one of *unbounded Love*, as the necessary and only Discipline that can qualify us for future Happiness. 'Tis evident that the noble Writer lays the principal Stress of his Charge, on the *Apocalypse*; a Work in it's whole Turn *strictly allegorical*, and therefore necessarily conversant in *Imagery* and *visible Representation*. To this he hath most *perversely* added a figurative Expression of St. PAUL, who writing to a People among whom the *Prize-Races* prevailed, represents the Christian *Progress* as a *Contest* of this Kind; and shews it's Superiority over the Former, "because, saith he, "they labour to obtain a *corruptible*, but "we an *incorruptible Crown*." In the mean
Time

ESSAY III. Time he hath omitted the many *Discourses* *Parables, Maxims*, of our Saviour, in which he perpetually exhorts his Disciples to endeavour after unfeigned Virtue and universal Benevolence, as the only Means that can bring them to future *Perfection*. He hath forgot too the repeated Exhortations of St. PAUL, who sets CHARITY so high above every other Gift or Possession, and adds, the Reason of it's Preheminence, "because " it shall never fail." 'Tis true indeed, as the noble Writer observes (with what Intention, 'tis no difficult Matter to determine) " that our holy Religion is for the greatest " Part adapted to the very meanest Capacities:" We may add, " and to the very " worst of Dispositions too." And 'tis one of it's chief Glories, that it is so. Therefore we find it inforcing *every Motive* that can work on *every Mind*: Which must surely be acknowledged as the Character of *the Religion* that should come from him *who knew what was in Man*. But if the noble Writer would further insinuate, that the Idea of future Happiness ought to be *confined* to that of *virtuous Enjoyment*, whereas the *Christian Religion* doth not so *confine* it: we have already seen, that, from
the

the Nature of things, this Refinement is ^{SECT.} _{VI.} *visionary and groundless*^k.”

WE now come to the Examination of a Passage more *extraordinary* and *original* than any yet produced. The noble Writer tells us, “ I could be almost tempted to think, “ that the true Reason why some of the most “ *heroic Virtues* have so little Notice taken “ of them in our *holy Religion*, is, because “ there would have been no Room left for “ *Disinterestedness*, had they been entitled “ to a Share of that infinite Reward, which “ Providence has *by Revelation* assigned to “ other Duties. *Private Friendship*, and “ *Zeal* for the *Public* and *our Country*, are “ Virtues purely *voluntary* in a *Christian*. “ They are no essential *Parts* of his *Charity*. “ He is not so tied to the Affairs of *this* “ *Life*; nor is he obliged to enter into such “ Engagements with this *lower World*, as “ are of *no Help* to him in acquiring a *better*. “ His *Conversation* is in *Heaven*. Nor has “ he Occasion for such *supernumerary Cares* “ and Embarrassments here on Earth, as “ may *obstruct his Way* thither, or retard “ him in the careful Task of working out “ his own Salvation^l.”

^k See above, *Essay* ii. § 9. ^l *Wit and H.* Part ii. § 3.

WE have already seen, that the real Nature of Virtue consists “in procuring or promoting the greatest public Happiness:” And that this Truth is often, *occasionally*, acknowledged by Lord *Shaftesbury* himself. Consequently, the *highest* or most *heroic Virtue*, is that which tends to *accomplish* this great *End*: Nor can any *pretended* Virtue be either *great* or *heroic* that tends to *obstruct* or *destroy* it.

ON this plain Principle, self-evident to unbiassed *Reason*, let us examine the Passage now before us. And first, as to *private Friendship*, which the noble Writer says, “is a Virtue purely voluntary in a Christian:”—Let us consider how far it may be regarded as a Virtue *at all*.—Now, on strict Enquiry we shall find, that the extreme Degree of Friendship recommended and applauded by the Ancients, and here patronized by the noble Author, is essentially *repugnant* to *true Virtue*: In *Friendship* they placed the *Chief Happiness*:—And if this consists in the supreme Love of *one*, it must needs *diminish*, if not *extinguish*, the Love of *all*; because our chief or whole *Attention* must be *employed*, our every *View* and *Design* centered in giving Pleasure or *procuring Happiness*.

Happiness to one *Individual*. And this is the very fairest Light it can be view'd in.

SECT.
VI.

FOR we shall further see, how little it generally partakes of the Nature of true Virtue, if we consider whence it hath it's Rise. This is universally allowed to be "a Similarity of *Disposition*, *Will*, and " *Manners*." This Circumstance demonstrates, that in general it must be *contrary* to Virtue: For hence, the *general* Good must be often sacrificed to gratify the Will of *one*. Of this dreadful Effect, Instances might be produced almost innumerable. Let one suffice. "Between TIBERIUS " GRACCHUS and C. BLOSIUS, a *dear and* " *perfect Friendship* subsisted: The latter " being seized for aiding the former in his " Conspiracy, was brought before the *Consuls*. He pleaded his Friendship to GRACCHUS in Excuse for his Crime." He was then asked, "What, suppose he had bid " you *fire the Capitol*, would you have done " it?" To this he boldly replied, "He " never would have laid me under such a " Necessity; but if he had, *I would have* " *obeyed him*^m." A *thorough Friend* sure: But a *vile Citizen*; notwithstanding the

^m Cic. *Lælius*.

artful Gloss of an ingenious Modern, who hath attempted to make out the Innocence of his Intentionsⁿ.

'Tis true, the Advocates for this *Attachment* sometimes assert, that it cannot consist but with *Virtue*. That it *ought not*, is certain: That it *cannot*, or *doth not*, is a groundless Conceit; unless they chuse to make this Circumstance a Part of the Definition, which were idle Sophistry. But if by Friendship be meant, what indeed is always meant, "a violent Love and Attachment to another" "on Account of a Similarity of Manners;" this, 'tis certain, hath often, nay most commonly subsisted without Virtue: Among *Savages*, *Robbers*, *Heroes*, and *Banditti*. In LUCIAN'S Tract on Friendship we find, that out of Twelve notable Instances alledged, near half the Number were supported at the Expence of *Justice* or *Humanity*; either by the Commission of Rapine, Adultery, or Murder, or by aiding the Escape of those who ought to have suffered for these enormous Crimes. Will any one alledge the Emperor TIBERIUS or his Favourite SEJANUS as Patterns of Virtue? Yet their Friendship was so remarkable,

ⁿ See Montaigne's *Essay* on this Subject.

that,

that, in Honour of it, Altars were dedicated S E C T.
to *Friendship* by a *senatorial Decree*. Nay, VI.
some of the applauded Instances appealed
to, by the noble Author in his Comment on
this Passage, are even notorious in this Re-
spect. Such were THESEUS and PIRI-
THOUS, equally remarkable for *Friendship*,
Rapes, and *Plunder*. And such Instances
may still be found in every *savage* Country;
where the strongest Friendships are com-
monly formed: Where Men thus *leagued*,
go upon bold Adventures; and hazard
Life for each other without Reluctance,
while they *ravish* their Neighbours *Wives*,
and *carry off* their *Cattle*.

WITH as little Reason can it be urged,
that Friendships in general are *disinterested*,
so as to aspire to the Name of *Merit*. For
Merit, if it exists, can only arise from *Vir-
tue*: And *Virtue*, we have seen, doth not
essentially belong to *Friendship*. Nay, in
LUCIAN'S Tract, 'tis warmly debated be-
tween the contending Parties, whether *Af-
fection* or *private Advantage* hath a more
considerable Share in this applauded *Union*.
Indeed the *civilized* and haughty *Greek*
stands upon the Punctilio of *Honour*, and
piques himself on the Notion of *Disinterest*:
But

ESSAY
III.

But the *undisguised Sythian* insists that mutual *Advantage and Support* are the ruling *Motives*. However, in Conclusion they fairly agree, in comparing a Set of fast Friends to GERYON with *three Heads* and *six Hands*, enabled thro' this Increase of Strength, to overturn all Opposition°. But suppose *Affection* the ruling Principle, as unquestionably it often is; where is the *Merit*, while *confined* to *one Person*? Nay, it must rather lean towards *Demerit*, because it appears, 'tis rather *dangerous* than *favourable* to *public Affection* and *Virtue*. 'Tis evident then, that the *friendly Affection* is no more *meritorious* than the *conjugal*, *paternal*, or *filial Affection*; which being of a *contracted* Nature, are often consistent with great *Baseness* of Mind, and destructive of a more enlarged *Benevolence*^p. And

° *Luciani Toxaris.*

^p Thus a Writer of distinguished Abilities: "Many Instances occur in History and daily Experience, of Men, not ashamed to commit base and selfish Enormities, who have retained a Tenderness for their Posterity by the strong and generous Instinct of Nature. The Story of *Licinius Macer*, who was Father to *Calvus* the great Orator, is very remarkable, as related by a Roman Annalist. Having gone thro' the Office of Prætor, and governed a Province, he was accused, upon returning Home, of Extortion

what

what Degree of *Merit* or *Disinterest* there SECT.
VI.
is in Regards of this Nature, when separate from more extensive ones, we may learn from the noble Writer himself, who says, “there is a *Selfishness* in the Love that
“is paid to a *Wife*, and in the Attendance
“on a *Family*, and all the little Affairs of
“it, which, had I my full Scope of Action
“in the Public, I should hardly have submitted to^s.”

So far then is clear, That *Friendship*, or
“a violent Affection founded on a Similarity of Disposition and Manners,” is more likely to produce *Vice* than *Virtue*; as it tends to fix such Habits of Mind as must lessen our Concern for the *general Good*. And in Fact, every one’s Experience will point out to him Numbers of Men, naturally benevolent to *all*, but so strongly biased and drawn in by particular Attach-

“and Abuses of his Power. The very Morning of
“his Trial he strangled himself, after having sent
“Word to *Cicero*, who was preparing to plead against
“him, that, being determined to put an End to his
“Life before Sentence (tho’ the Penalty did not extend
“to taking it away) the Prosecution could not go on,
“and his Fortune would be saved to the Benefit of his
“Son.”—*Considerations on the Law of Forfeiture*,
p. 32.

^sLd. S’s *Let. to Mr. Moleworth*, Let. ix.

Z

ments,

ESSAY
III.

ments, that their *Regards* and *Beneficence* are centered wholly on a *select Few*; while the rest of Mankind pass unheeded and unassisted, and have no Share in their Benevolence, further than what *Self-Deceit* throws out, in *unmeaning Wishes* for their Welfare.

'Tis no less evident, that, thro' the natural Advantages of this partial Alliance, Mankind must ever be prone to embrace it, in Exclusion of more extensive Affections, where no such Advantages can follow. It would therefore have been a *Defect* in the *Christian* Religion, to have enjoined or even recommended it in this Extreme. Accordingly we find, in the Gospel, every Attachment of this Kind, however natural and alluring it may be, set very little above the *lowest Selfishness*, and justly represented as entirely consistent with it. "If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? Do not the Publicans even the same?"

BESIDES; there is something so extraordinary in the noble Writer's Scheme of "enjoining Friendship," as sufficiently exposeth its own Weakness. Friendship, his

^r *Mat. v.*

Lordship

Lordship allows, can only arise “from a ^{SECT.} “Consent and Harmony of Minds^s.” How ^{VI.} then could Christianity have *enjoined* us the Practice of this *supposed* Virtue? What must it have *enjoined* us? Why, to go in quest of a *Mind* resembling our own. It might with equal Propriety have enjoined us to go in quest of a *Face* resembling our own: And with as much Reason, for all the Purposes of *true Virtue*.

BUT if by *Friendship* be meant, what indeed is *not* generally meant, “A particular Love and Esteem for the virtuous “or worthy,” in which Sense alone it can have any Tendency to produce true Virtue; then we may justly affirm, that it is recommended in the Gospel, both by *Example* and by *Precept*. It is naturally involved in that all-comprehensive Command of *universal Charity*: For tho’ many have been zealous in their Friendships, while they were insensible to publick Affection; yet, such is the Temperament of human Nature, that no Instance was ever known, of a Man zealous for the Happiness of *all*, yet remiss in or incapable of a *true Friendship* for the *worthy*. It is recommended by St. PAUL,

^s In the Note.

ESSAY
III.

who says, that "peradventure for a good
" *Man*, one would even *dare to die*." It is
recommended by our Saviour's Example,
who selected a beloved Disciple as his bosom
Friend, whose Writings are the Overflow-
ings of a Heart filled with the purest and
most unbounded Love¹." Above all, it is
recommended by our Saviour in that noble
and divine Passage; "Who is my Mother
" or my Brethren? Even *he that doth the*
" *Will of my Father* which is in Heaven, he
" is my *Brother, and Sister, and Mother*."

So much for the spurious Virtue of *private Friendship*: Let us next consider the
noble Writer's Charge against *Christianity*,
on Account of its not enjoining "a Zeal
" for the *Public* and our Country:" For
this too, it seems, "is a Virtue purely vo-
" *luntary in a Christian*." Now all the Ab-
surdities which load his Charge with Re-
gard to *Friendship*, fall with equal Weight
on this groundless Imputation. For if by
"Zeal for the Public and our Country,"
be meant, a Zeal that is inconsistent with
the Rights and common Welfare of Man-
kind, 'tis so far from being a *Virtue*, that,
as in the case of *Friendship*, it is really a

¹ *St. John.*

² *Matt. xii.*

Crime, because it tends to produce the most fatal Consequences. And an Army of victorious Warriors returning triumphant on this vile Principle, however graced with the flattering Title of *Heroes*, and Ensigns of *Glory*, are in Truth no better than a Band of *publick Robbers*: or, as our great Poet, a Christian and a Lover of Mankind, finely expresseth it,

*An impious Crew
Of Men conspiring to uphold their State,
By worse than hostile Deeds; violating the Ends
For which our Country is a Name so dear* *.

Now 'tis evident beyond a Doubt, that at the Time when our Saviour appeared, this destructive *Partiality*, this avowed Conspiracy against the common Rights of Mankind, was universally prevalent among the most civilized Nations. The JEWS were not exempted from this common Excess. "*Inter ipsos Fides obstinata, adversus alios hostile Odium,*" was their Character among the Heathens. The *Greeks* and *Romans* committed and boasted of the most cruel Enormities, conquered and enslaved innocent Nations, plundered Cities, and laid

* *Sampson Agonistes.*

ESSAY
III.

waste Kingdoms, thro' this absurd and *impious Love* of their *Country*; a Principle no better in many of its Consequences, than the most horrid and accursed *Bigotry*. It had therefore been an essential Defect, nay rather a mischievous Absurdity, in the Christian Religion, to have enjoined, encouraged, or countenanced a Partiality unjust in itself; to which, from Views of private Advantage, Mankind must ever be prone; and which, at the Time when Christianity began to spread, was indeed the reigning and *predominant Error*.

BUT if by "Zeal for the Publick and "Love of our Country" be meant, such a Regard to its Welfare as shall induce us to sacrifice every View of private Interest for its Accomplishment, yet still *in Subordination* to the *greater Law* of *universal Justice*, this is naturally, nay necessarily involved in the Law of *universal Charity*. The noble Writer indeed affirms, "it is no essential Part of the Christian's Charity." On the contrary it is a *chief Part* of the Christian's Charity. It comes nobly recommended by the Examples of JESUS and St. PAUL: The one wept over the approaching Desolation of his Country: The other declared

4

his

his Willingness to be cut off from the Christian Community, if by this Means he might save his Countrymen. And that it necessarily ariseth from the Principle of universal Love will be evident, if we consider the *Nature and Situation of Man*. His *Nature* is such, that he inevitably contracts the *strongest* Affection for those with whom he converseth most *intimately*; and whose *Manners and Relations, civil and religious*, are most nearly connected with *his own*. His *Situation* is such, that he seldom hath an Opportunity of doing good Offices to any Society of Men, save only those of his *own Country*; all others being naturally removed beyond the narrow Sphere of private Beneficence. Hence the great Precept of universal Charity doth essentially involve “a Zeal for the “Publick and Love of our Country:” At once it *curbs* the *Exorbitance* of this natural Partiality, and *carries* it to it's full *Perfection*.

THE Necessity of this great *Regulating* Principle will further appear, if we consider, that with Regard to the Conduct of separate States and Kingdoms towards each other, no Sanctions of human Law can ever take place. In this respect all Nations must ever be in a State of Nature. There was

ESSAY
III.

therefore a more particular Necessity, on this Account, of regulating their Conduct towards each other, by the great Law of *universal Charity*.

It may seem strange that the noble Writer should be ignorant of these Truths. But after the Imputations he hath here thrown on *Christianity*, it will surely appear *more strange* that he was *not ignorant* of them: And that these bitter Sarcasms were thrown out against the clear Convictions of his own Mind. Yet nothing is more evident, as will now appear. That he understood the Nature of *Christian Charity*, is indisputable: He defines it, and properly, in the Note annexed to the Passage here refer'd to. In another Place, he calls it "the Principle of *Love*, the greatest Principle of our Religion*." In a following Paragraph he calls it "that divine Love which our Religion teaches†." But what is of all *most remarkable*; he sets it, under the new and whimsical Denominations of *Good-Nature* and *Friendship to Mankind*, far above *private* Friendship and Love of our *Country*. Take the Passages as they lie in the noble Writer. "Can any *Friendship* be so *heroic*,

* *Moralists*, Part ii. § 3.

† *Ib.*

" as

“as that towards *Mankind*? or *particular*”
 “Friendship well subsist, without such an
 “enlarged Affection^z?” Again. “*Theocles*
 “had almost convinced me, that to be a
 “Friend to any one in particular, ’twas
 “necessary first to be a Friend to Man-
 “kind^a.” Lastly, and above all. “And
 “can your *Country*, and what is *more*, your
 “KIND, require less Kindness from you,
 “or deserve less to be consider’d, than even
 “one of these *Chance-Creatures*? — O *Phi-*
 “*locles*, how little do you know the Extent
 “and Power of *Good-Nature*, and to what
 “an *heroic Pitch* a Soul may rise, which
 “knows the thorow Force of it; and *distrib-*
 “*uting it rightly*, frames in itself an *equal*,
 “just, and *universal Friendship*^b?” Here
 then we see the former Paragraph utterly
 reversed. For “*universal Love* is now the
 “only *heroic Principle*.” And “*private*
 “*Friendship* and the Love of *our Country*
 “are only commendable, as they make
 “*subordinate Parts* of it.”

To this astonishing and wilful Perver-
 sion of the Moral Principles of *Christianity*,
 we may add the subsequent Part of the
 same invenomed Paragraph. For he pro-

^a Ib. § 1.^a Ib. § 2.^b Ib. § 1.

ESSAY
III.

ceeds to *insinuate*, as if *Christian Charity* were no *active* Principle ; but such as leads it's Profelytes to a State of mere *Contemplation* and *Inaction*, without Regard to *social* Life, and the Affairs of this *lower World*. We may defy the noble Writer's most zealous Admirers to find any other rational Construction for the following Passage. " The Christian, he says, is not obliged to enter into such *Engagements* with this *lower World*, as are of no Help to him in acquiring a better. His *Conversation* is in Heaven. Nor has he Occasion for such *supernumerary Cares*, and *Embarrassments* here on Earth, as may *obstruct his Way* thither, or *retard* him in the *careful Task* of working out *his own Salvation*." Unexampled Prevarication ! thrown out against that Religion which enjoins an *active* Virtue, a *Regard* to the *present* Happiness of Man in *every possible Relation*, as the only Way to obtain Felicity hereafter : Against that Religion, whose *Founder* did not *idly barangue* in a *Closet* upon *Beauty*, *Virtue*, and *Decorum*, amidst the *Indolence* and *Pride* of Life ; but *practised* the *Divine Truths* he taught, and " *went about doing Good*," amongst

mongst the meanest and most despised of his Fellow Citizens.

SECT.
VI.

To be unmoved on this Occasion were *Stupidity*; not to confess it, *Cowardice*. *Error* should be exposed with *Calmness*; but *Dishonesty* merits our Abhorrence.

YET from these Cavils tho' groundless, and Misrepresentations tho' voluntary, we may draw an Observation which highly recommends *Christianity*. We may hence see the superior Excellence and Dignity of it's moral Precepts, above the most *applauded* among the Heathen: And how nobly, by one great Principle, it rectifies every little Partiality to which the human Heart is subject. For this is clear; that in one Age or Nation, *Friendship* hath been *idolized* as the supreme Virtue; in another, *Hospitality*; in a Third, the Love of our *Country*;

*Indeed the noble Writer pursuing the same kind Intention to Christianity, pretends that the Law of *Hospitality*, or *Regard to Strangers*, among the *ancient Heathens*, was *equivalent* (nay he gives a very disingenuous Suggestion, as if it was far *superior*) to *Christian Charity*. "Such, says he, was ancient *Heathen Charity*, and pious Duty towards the whole of Mankind; both those of different Nations and *different Worships*." (*Misc iii. c. 1. in the Notes.*) For Instances of this, he is forced to go back as far as *Homer*, who indeed has given us some fine Pictures of ancient Manners of this kind, in his *Odyssey*. The
in

ESSAY
III.

in a Fourth, enthusiastic *Contemplation*; in a Fifth, the *Austerities* of the Hermit; in a Sixth, the *external Practice* of Religion; in a Seventh, which is the *fashionable Peculiarity* of *our own Times*, *occasional Acts* of Humanity and Compassion, while the more *extensive* and *Publick Views* of Beneficence are *neglected* or even *derided*. How different, how superior, is the great Christian Principle of *universal Love*! Which rising gradually, by a Progress thro' all the

noble Writer might have found others, in no Respect inferior, in the Old Testament, recorded long before *universal Charity* was ever thought of, in the Stories of *Abraham* and *Lot*. The Truth is, the *Guest* or *Stranger* was held *sacred*, because he was under the *Protection* of his *Host*: It was therefore deemed *criminal*, to violate a *Trust* thus *reposed*. But it happens unfortunately for his Lordship's Argument, that in these Old Times *Rapine* and *Plunder* were as much in Vogue as either *Friendship* or *Hospitality*, and equally creditable. These *phantom* Appearances of *Virtue* are still to be seen in the *Arabian Deserts* as frequently as ever. If a Traveller comes to the Door of a wild *Arab's* Tent at Night, he is received with so boundless an *Hospitality*, that the *Host* would expose himself, his Wife, and Children to certain Destruction to save the Life of his *Guest*. Had this *hospitable Savage* met the Traveller in the Deserts at Noon, he would have *strip'd* him to the Skin, and on the least Resistance laid him *dead at his Feet*. And this was the true Extent of the noble Writer's boasted *Heathen Charity*.

less

less enlarged Affections towards Parents, S E C T.
VI.
Children, Friends, Country, and spreading
till it embraceth all Mankind, and every
Creature that hath Life, forms that *perfect*
Virtue in which human Weakness is most
prone to be *defective*, and which implies
and includes every moral Perfection. *Chris-*
tianity alone hath *kindled* in the Heart of
Man this *vital* Principle; which *beaming*
there as from a *Center*, like the great *Foun-*
tain of *Light* and *Life* that sustains and
cheers the attendant Planets, renders it's
Profelytes indeed “*burning and shining*
“*Lights*,” shedding their *kindly Influence*
on all around them, in that just *Proportion*,
which their *respective Distances* may de-
mand.

S E C T I O N VII.

THE preceding Remarks may suffici- S E C T.
VII.
ently obviate every Cavil of the noble Writ-
er against the *essential* Parts of *Christianity*.
But as his Lordship hath casually intersper-
sed several Random Insinuations, we must
be content to receive them as they happen
to appear, since they are of that disjointed
Kind as to be incapable of Connection.

IN

IN a marginal Note, he gives an Account of the Migration of the *Israelites* from *Egypt*, under the Conduct of MOSES. He thinks proper to reject the clear Account which the *Jewish Legislator* himself gives, "That they departed, in order to worship "the true God;" and preposterously prefers what TACITUS and JUSTIN have said on that Subject; who affirm indeed, but without Proof, "that the *Jews* were driven "out of *Egypt* on Account of their *Leprosy*." This Partiality might of itself appear *mysterious* enough, when we consider the particular and consistent Account given us by the very Leader of the Expedition: For, what should we think of the Man, who should prefer the random Conjectures of an ignorant Modern, to XENOPHON'S *Retreat* or CÆSAR'S *Commentaries*? But the noble Writer's Partiality will appear still more unaccountable, if we consider the following Passage of STRABO; a Writer as much beyond TACITUS in Candour, as beyond JUSTIN (if indeed JUSTIN and not TROGUS POMPEIUS, be answerable for this Slander) in true Judgement. This Author, STRABO, second to none in Antiquity,

^a *Misc. ii. c. i. Notes.*

speaks

speaks thus: “ MOSES, an *Egyptian* Priest, *retreated* along with a Number of *religious Followers*. For he affirmed and taught, “ that the *Egyptians* were mistaken, who “ imaged the Deity under the Forms of the “ Brute-Creation; as likewise the *Libyans* “ and *Greeks*, who represented the *Gods* “ under the *human Shape*. He held that “ alone to be *God*, which comprehends every living Creature, the Earth, and Sea; “ which is called *Heaven*, the *World*, or the “ *universal Nature*; whose *Image*, who “ that is in his right Mind, would dare to “ form out of any *earthly Materials*? *Rejecting* therefore all use of *Images*, he determined to dedicate to him a Temple “ worthy of his Nature, and worship him “ without Images. — On this Principle he “ persuaded and brought over many *well-disposed Men*, and led them forth into “ that Country where now *Jerusalem* is “ *built*.” A noble Testimony, sure, from

Ἐ Μωσὶς γὰρ τις τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἱερέων — ἀπῆρξεν ἐκεῖσε. — Ἐφῆ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος καὶ ἐδίδασκεν ὡς ἔκ οὐθὺς Φρονέειν οἱ Αἰγυπτῖοι ἐχθροῖς εἰκαζόντες καὶ βροσκημασι τὸ θεῖον· ὅδ’ οἱ Λίβυες. ἔκ ἐν δὲ ὅδ’ οἱ Ἑλλῆνες ἀνθρωπομορφες τυπῆτες· εἰ γὰρ ἐν τῷ τῷ μόνον θεὸς τὸ περιέχον ἡμᾶς ἀπᾶντας καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλατταν, ὁ καλεσμεν

a Heathen

ESSAY
III.

a Heathen Writer: *Less* he could not say, if he was well informed; and, unless he had embraced the *Jewish* Religion, he could not have said *more*.

THERE is another Passage (*Misc. v. c. i.*) which discovers somewhat of unfair dealing in the noble Writer. In the Margin, he prettily enough criticizes the Preface to St. LUKE's Gospel. But in the Text he hath paraphrased the Evangelist's Expression, in a Manner so distant from any thing St. LUKE either wrote or *meant*, as must not a little astonish every candid Reader. St. LUKE says, "*It seemed good to him to write in Order the Things that he knew.*" To which the noble Writer adds, "As there were many, it seems, long afterwards, who did; and undertook accordingly, to write in Order and *as seemed good to them, &c.*"—What shall we say of the noble Writer on this Occasion? Why, this only; "That

ουρανου και κοσμον, και την των οντων Φυσιν. Τητε δε τις αν εικονα πλαττειν θαρρησειε νεν εχων ομοιαν τινα των παρ' ημιν; αλλ' εαν δει πασαν ξεανοποιαν, τεμενος αφορισαντας και σικου αξιολογου τιμαν ειδεσ χωρις.—Εκεινος μεν εν τοιαυτα λεγων επεισεν ευγνωμονας ανδρας εκ ολιγης, και απηγαγεν επι τον τοπον τειλον, οπε νυν εσι το εν τοις Ιερουσολυμοις κτισμα. Strabo, l. xvi.

" in-

“ inasmuch as it *seemed good to him* to interpret this Preface of St. LUKE, he therefore thought himself at Liberty to interpret it *as it seemed good to him.*”

THERE are three more Subjects, which his Lordship hath thought fit to represent in the Manner which *seemed good to him.* These are, first, the divine Foreknowledge communicated to JOSEPH in the Interpretation of PHARAOH's Dreams. Secondly, the Rise of *Bigotry*, or religious *Intolerance* and *Persecution.* Thirdly, and principally, The Relation which the *Jewish* Institutions bear to the *Egyptian*^f. In all these, the noble Writer hath employed every Art of *Insinuation* and *Address*, that he might throw an Odium on the *Mosaic* Dispensation. These Passages might well merit a particular Consideration, had I not been happily prevented by my most learned Friend, who hath fully exposed their Weakness in that inestimable Treasure of all true Knowledge, *The divine Legation of MOSES.* Thither the Reader is referr'd ; where he will find these Questions treated with that *Reach* and *Mastery*

^f See *Misc.* ii. c. i.

ESSAY so peculiar to the Author of that great
 III. Work ^g.

It may now be necessary to examine the third Chapter of the noble Writer's second Miscellany; where he makes it his Pretence, "to prove the Force of *Humour* in Religion." Of which it may be said, that it is the truest Piece of *Random-Work*, the most genuine *Farce*, that is perhaps to be met with in any Writer of whatever Age or Nation. He *divides* it (as every *Farce* ought to be *divided*) into three *Acts*. In its Progress we are carried into a very *Fairy-Land* of *Thought*, if not more properly a *confused Chaos*. For first, he sets about with great Solemnity to prove, "that *Wit and Humour* are "corroborative of Religion, and promotive "of true Faith:" To prove this, a Story is told, by which it appears, that *not Wit and Humour*, but *good Humour* or *Easiness of Temper* is thus *corroborative* and *promotive*: Then, in Conclusion, *Wit and Humour* come in again, to overturn all that hath been done, and shew that *good Humour* hath suffered itself to be ridiculously *imposed upon*.

^g With Relation to the first of these Points, see the *Div. Leg.* Vol. ii. p. 164. For the second, see *ib.* Book ii. § 6. For the third, see Book iv. § 6. *passim*.

THO' it doth not appear that our modern Advocates for *Wit and Humour* are so *nearly interested* in their Fate as they seem to *think* themselves; yet it must be owned their Generosity is so much the more to be applauded, in thus *pleading* the Cause of *Clients* who *never employed them*. However, taking for granted what seems to be the real Foundation of their Writings on this Subject, "that *talking* in Praise of *Wit and Humour* is a Proof of their being "possessed of them, and that consequently "they are *Parties in the Cause*;" I shall not envy the noble Writer *any Man's Admiration*, who may think proper to esteem him a *Wit*, on account of the *grotesque* Appearances he assumes throughout this present *Miscellany*. 'Tis my Intention only to convince the plain Reader, that this *supposed Wit* is by no means *Philosophical*.

THE first *Head* therefore, he tells us, is "to make it appear, that Wit and Humour "are corroborative of Religion and promotive of true Faith." To this Purpose he tires us with a Story, not the most elegantly plann'd, in my Apprehension, of a "Club "of *merry Gentlemen*, who in a travelling "Expedition meeting with sorry Roads and

ESSAY III. "worfe Fare, laugh'd themselves into a
 "Belief, that both Roads, Accommodations,
 "and Cookery, were perfectly good."
 What follows is the Moral or Application
 of this curious Conceit. "Had I to deal
 "with a malicious Reader, he might per-
 "haps pretend to infer from this Story of
 "my travelling Friends, that I intended
 "to represent it as an easy Matter for Peo-
 "ple to persuade themselves into what
 "Opinion or Belief they pleased."

Now without troubling ourselves to en-
 quire how far this Story is a Proof of the
 noble Writer's fundamental Maxim, "That
 "Ridicule is a Test of Truth;" let us pro-
 ceed to the intended *Moral*; which seems
 evidently calculated to throw a false Light
 on *religious Belief*; by representing it as the
 mere Effect of *Prejudice*, *Self-Imposition*,
 and *Deceit*. To rescue it, therefore, from
 this insinuated Calumny, we need not *deny*,
 but *insist*, that the Passions, false Interests,
 and Prejudices of Mankind must indeed for
 ever hang as a Byass upon their Opinions.
 But it must be further observed too, that
 these Passions and false Interests will at least
 as often prejudice them *against* Religion, as
in its Favour. 'Tis true, there are Preju-

dices in Favour of Religion, arising from *Education* ; but there are Prejudices against it too, arising from *vicious Passions*. Some are *sanguine* in their *Hopes*, and hence, while their Conduct is virtuous, *wish*, and therefore *believe* Religion to be *true* : Others are *sanguine* in their *Hopes*, but *abandoned* in their Conduct, and therefore *live* themselves into a Belief that Religion is *false*. Some, thro' a Dread of Annihilation, persuade themselves beyond the Strength of Evidence : Others, thro' the Prevalence of a suspicious Cast of Mind, reject even what is probable. Thus Passions and Prejudices work powerfully indeed ; but they work both *for* and *against* Religion. It should seem then, that the noble Writer's Moral, which he aims at Religion, may with equal Force be apply'd to *Infidelity* : For it is but supposing a Man given up to *Vanity* or *Vice*, and we shall soon “ see him enter into such
 “ a Plot as this against his own Under-
 “ standing, and endeavour by all possible
 “ Means to persuade both himself and o-
 “ thers of what he thinks *convenient* and
 “ *useful* to DISBELIEVE.” 'Tis idle therefore to insist on the Prejudices either *for* or *against* Religion : they will both naturally

ESSAY
III.

arise; and it is the Part of Reason to controul them. But we may safely leave it to any one's Determination, which Temper of Mind is the most *amiable*, that which entertains Prejudices *in Favour of Religion*, or *against it*.

THE noble Writer proceeds to his *second* Head; but seems at the same time conscious how little it was to any good Purpose. However, in Failure of *Truth* and *Method*, he again hath recourse to what he seems to think *Wit and Humour*; and which, for aught I know, may pass for such among his Admirers. "However, says he, lest I should be charged for being worse than my Word, I shall endeavour to satisfy my Reader, by pursuing my Method proposed; if peradventure he can call to Mind what that Method was. Or if he cannot, the Matter is not so very important, but that he may safely pursue his Reading, without further Trouble."

BUT tho' it was prudently done in the noble Writer, to throw the Subject of his *second* Head into *Shades*; yet for the Sake of Truth, we must drag it into *Light*. It was therefore to prove "That *Wit and Humour* are used as the proper Means of
" pro-

“ promoting true Faith, by the holy Foun-
 “ ders of Religion.” But when we come
 to the Point, for *Wit and Humour*, by Vir-
 tue of a certain Dexterity of Hand, the
 Reader is again unexpectedly presented
 with *good Humour* in their Stead. This,
 it will be said, is nimble dealing ; but what
 of that, so long as it may tend to disgrace
Christianity and its *Founder* ? The noble
 Writer’s Application therefore, is still more
 Extraordinary. “ The Affection and Love
 “ which procures a true Adherence to the
 “ new religious Foundation, must depend
 “ either on a real or *counterfeit Goodness* in
 “ the *religious Founder* : Whatever *ambitious*
 “ *Spirit* may *inspire him* ; whatever *savage*
 “ *Zeal* or *persecuting Principle* may lie in
 “ *Reserve*, ready to disclose itself when Au-
 “ thority and Power is once obtained ; the
 “ *first Scene of Doctrine*, however fails not
 “ to present us with the agreeable Views
 “ of *Joy, Love, Meekness, Gentleness, and*
 “ *Moderation.*” — To speak my inmost Sen-
 timents of this Passage, it is of too black a
 Nature to deserve a Reply. There are
 certain Degrees of *Calumny* so *flagrant*, as
 injured Truth disdains to answer ; and this
 is of the Kind. On this Occasion, there-

ESSAY fore, we shall leave the noble Writer to the
 III. Reflections of every *honest Man*; in Con-
 formity to the Example of that blessed Per-
 son, “*who when he was reviled, reviled not*
 “*again*^h.”

THE next Circumstance in holy Writ, that falls under his Lordship's Animadversion, is what he calls “The famous *Entry* “or *high Dance* performed by DAVID in “the Procession of the sacred Coffer.” In which he hath again represented Things *as it seemed good to him*. Here, by confounding *ancient*, with *modern Manners* (in such a Way as is quite unworthy of his Character, and suited only to the Genius of a *Coffee-house Freethinker*) he hath endeavoured to bring down the *solemn Procession* of a grand *religious Festival*, to a Level with the Merriments of an *Apish Dancing-Master*. This Representation may very probably pass current among many of his Admirers; so that it had been necessary to set the Matter in its true Light; but that here too, I am happily prevented by a judicious Writer, who hath done all imaginable Justice to the Argument; and effectually ex-

^h See above, § 3. of this *Essay*, p 269.

posed the noble Writer's Weakness and Insincerityⁱ.

SECT.
VII.

HIS Lordship now proceeds to the Story of the Prophet JONAH, which he hath burlesqued and turned to Farce with that Delicacy, so peculiar to himself. The Story itself is indeed authenticated by our SAVIOUR's mention of it, as emblematical of his own Death and Resurrection. Its Moral is excellent; being an illustrious Display of the divine Mercy to penitent and returning Sinners, exemplified in GOD's remitting the Punishment denounced, and sparing a devoted City on its sincere Repentance; as also of the Frailty and Imperfection of the best of Men, set forth in the Prophet's Behaviour on the Occasion. To this we may add "the Propriety of the Miracle recorded," which was itself an extraordinary and most awakening "Instance of Punishment *inflicted on Disobedience, and remitted on Repentance*;" and therefore bearing a *strong Relation* to the *Event* for which it was wrought; being peculiarly *adapted*, when made known to the *Ninevites*, to induce them to hearken to the Prophet's Preaching, to *believe* what

ⁱ See Dr. Leland's *Answer to the Moral Philosopher*, p. 291, &c.

ESSAY he denounced and promised, and rouze them
 III. at once into a *Fear* of GOD's *Justice*, and a
Reliance on his *Mercy*^k.

SUCH then being the real Nature of the Fact; the Secret of the noble Writer's polite Representation lies in his burlesquing the Circumstances of the *supposed Dialogue* between GOD and the Prophet; an easy Task for any one who is disingenuous or ignorant enough to represent as strictly *litteral*, what is evidently *parabolical*; according to the frequent and known Manner of *Composition* in the earliest Ages^l. This his Lordship seems to have been aware of: "Whatsoever of this Kind may be *allego-*
gorically understood, or in the Way of *Pa-*
rable or *Fable*, &c." Now had he treated the Scripture Story with the same Candour which he affords to other ancient Writers, he would not have abused this Passage in so unworthy a Manner. A Writer of no Abilities, if provided only with a sufficient Quantity of Spleen and false Con-

^k In the xith Chapter of St. *Luke*, our Saviour says, that "Jonas was a SIGN unto the *Ninevites*." This evidently implies, that he considered this Miracle, and the Fate of *Jonas*, as an *Example* of *Warning* to that People; in the Manner here represented.

^l See the *Div. Leg.* Vol. ii. where a full Account is given of the Origin and Progress of this kind of Writing.
 ceit,

ceit, might easily ridicule his favourite Piece, “The Judgment of HERCULES :” And to a raw Imagination, disgrace that instructive Fable, by burlesquing the supposed Conference between the *Goddeesses* and the *Heroe*. VIRGIL hath in Fact been so served. And if Works of mere Invention, and of the heroic Kind, studiously contrived to avoid every thing low, obscure, or equivocal, are subject to this Abuse; can we wonder, if the succinct History of an ancient Fact, recording the Dispensations of Providence, a Matter very obscure in itself, and relative to ancient Manners so distant from our own, should be liable to the false and dishonest Lights of Buffoonry? We may further observe that the noble Writer’s Ridicule sometimes falls on divine Providence itself: “His Tutor had good Eyes, and a long Reach; he overtook the Renegade at Sea, &c.”— Could an *Epicurean* have used more indecent Language?

HIS Lordship goes on, to ridicule “the Descriptions, Narrations, Expressions, and Phrases” of holy Scripture: But these we shall pass over at present, as they will deserve a separate Consideration. He touches once more on the *Patriarch ABRAHAM*; and

ESSAY and they who are curious enough to look
 III. for the Objection, may find a full Answer
 to it, in the Place here referred to^m.

THE next, and only remaining Circum-
 stance worthy of Notice in this Miscellany,
 is a *pretended Translation* from PLUTARCH:
 In which the noble Writer deals as honour-
 ably by that Author, as before by GORGIAS
 or ARISTOTLEⁿ. But here too, I am pre-
 vented by the learned PHILELEUTHERUS
 LIPSIENSIS: However, as his Lordship's
 Conduct is *remarkable* on this Occasion, it
 may not be improper to exhibit a View
 of it in the great Critic's Words; who, it
 must be owned, hath chastised the noble
 Writer somewhat *roughly*, and *Aristarchus*-
 like.

“ HE (Mr. COLLINS) quotes the Place
 “ as it is translated forsooth in the *Cha-*
 “ *racteristics*, a Book writ by an anony-
 “ mous, but, whoever he is, a very whim-
 “ fical and conceited Author. *O wretched*
 “ Grecians (*so that Author renders PLU-*
 “ TARCH) *who bring into Religion that*
 “ *frightful Mien of sordid and vilifying*
 “ *Devotion, ill-favoured Humiliation and*

^m Div. Leg. Vol. ii. p. 620.
 Essay i. § ix.

ⁿ See above,

“ *Contrition, abject Looks and Countenances,*
 “ *Consternations, Prostrations, Disfigura-*
 “ *tions, and, in the Act of Worship, Distor-*
 “ *tions, constrained and painful Postures of*
 “ *the Body, wry Faces, beggarly Tones,*
 “ *Mumpings, Grimaces, Cringings, and the*
 “ *rest of this Kind. — Thus far that name-*
 “ *less Opiniate: And our worthy Writer*
 “ *(Mr. COLLINS) introduces it with a grave*
 “ *Air, that PLUTARCH thus satirizes the*
 “ *public Forms of Devotion; which yet are*
 “ *such, as, in almost all Countries, pass for*
 “ *the true Worship of God. — This would*
 “ *partly be true, if those were really the*
 “ *Words of PLUTARCH: But as not one*
 “ *Syllable of them is found there, what*
 “ *must we think of this Couple of Corrup-*
 “ *ters and Forgers? There is nothing in all*
 “ *this, but their own Disfigurations and*
 “ *Distortions of the Original; their own*
 “ *Mumpings, and beggarly Tones, while*
 “ *they pretend to speak in PLUTARCH’S*
 “ *Voice. — PLUTARCH having observed,*
 “ *that Superstition alone allows no Ease*
 “ *nor Intermiſſion, even in Sleep; their*
 “ *Dreams, adds he, do as much torment*
 “ *them then, as their waking Thoughts did*
 “ *before; they seek for Expiations of those*
 “ *Visions*

ESSAY " *Visions nocturnal; Charms, Sulfurations,*
 III. " *Dippings in the Sea, Sitzings all Day on*
 " *the Ground.*

" O Greeks, *Inventors of Barbarian Ills,*
 " *whose Superstition has devised Rowlings*
 " *in the Mire and in the Kennels, Dippings*
 " *in the Sea, Grovelings and Throwings*
 " *upon the Face, deformed Sitzings on the*
 " *Earth, absurd and uncouth Adorations.*
 " This is a verbal Interpretation of that
 " Place — and now I dare ask the Reader,
 " if he has seen a more flagrant Instance of
 " *Unfaithfulness and Forgery*, than this of
 " our two Writers? *Humiliation and Con-*
 " *trition*, known Words in your *English*
 " *Liturgy*, are to be traduced here under
 " PLUTARCH's Name, Where do those
 " and their other Phrases appear in the
 " Original? or where do the Rites, he
 " really speaks of, appear in your Form of
 " Worship? who among you *rowl them-*
 " *selves in Mire, or wallow in Kennels?* a
 " Ceremony fit only to be enjoined to such
 " *crackbrained and scandalous Writers.*"

THE remaining Part of this random
 Essay, is so completely vague and unintel-
 ligible, that although it be evidently de-

° *Phil. Lipsiens. p. 210, &c.*

signed,

signed, as a continued Sneer at *Christianity*, 'tis impossible to pick so much as an *Objection*, or even an *Idea* out of it. 'Tis therefore below Criticism. To conclude; when I see the noble Writer debase himself in this strange Manner, exercising at once the *lowest Derision*, and inflicting the *deadliest Wounds on Religion and Christianity*; I must own, the Appearance he makes, calls up to my Imagination a Remark of his own, "That there cannot be a Sight more shocking and contemptible, than that of a Man acting at once the Part of a *Merry-Andrew*, and an *Executioner*^P."

It may be necessary, finally, to obviate his Lordship's perpetual Sneer at the *Mysteries* of our Religion. These, when particular Topics fail him, are the standing Objects of his Raillery. To cite particular Passages of this Kind, were needless, because they are innumerable. The plain Implication of all his gross Banter, is, "That because in the *Christian Dispensation*, there are some things, which surpass human Comprehension, *Christianity* is therefore *absurd and ridiculous*."

WITH REGARD to this Cavil, therefore,

^P *Wit and H.* Part i. § iii.

ESSAY 'tis not my Intention to insist on proving the
 III. "Difference between Things being *above*
 "Reason and Things being *contrary* to Reason;
 "or that Propositions may be true,
 "though they are *above* our Reason, so
 "long as they are not *contrary* to it." Full
 enough has been said on this Subject, and
 by no body better than by the excellent
 Mr. Boyle. 'Tis a Question of more Importance
 to decide, "Why any thing *mysterious*
 "should be admitted into a Religion,
 "*revealed* for the Use of Man?" And in
 Answer to this, we need only observe, that
 Revealed Religion being designed for Man's
 Use, its *essential* Doctrines are plain, *intelligible*
 to all, *accommodated* to the Nature and
 Faculties of the *human* Kind. But as this
 System not only reveals to us our *Duty*, but
 all *Motives* too which may induce us to
 practise it; so, in Order to *inforce these*, and
convince us of the *Truth* of their divine Original,
 it was necessary that a *History of Providence*,
 or God's *Dispensation*, should be revealed
 along with them. Hence something *mysterious*
 must needs arise; unless you suppose Man
infinite in Knowledge. For as this System
 reveals to us several Particulars (so far as
 they stand connected with *Piety* and

and *Morals*) which relate to the Nature of SECT:
VII. God, the State of other, and superior Beings, the original Condition of Man, the Interposition of Providence for his Redemption, the Change of his Nature and Faculties, through the future Periods of his Existence; in all which Circumstances, his present Reach of Thought could give him no Information; 'tis evident, that in these Accounts, many Subjects must be *touched upon*, and *other Systems of Being* occasionally *glanced at*, the full Knowledge of which, must be far beyond his present Comprehension. Now so far as these Truths and Facts, though *imperfectly revealed*, have any Tendency to *enlighten* his Mind, as to the general *Plan of Providence*, or stand connected in any other Manner with *Religion* and *Virtue*, so as to *encourage* and *promote* them, they must surely be admitted as Circumstances of great *Propriety* and *Use*. Or even supposing some of them to be of *none*, yet if they stand so essentially *connected* with others *which are*, so that the one cannot be destroyed without the other; this very Circumstance of *essential Union*, effectually destroys every Objection against their being of divine Original.

ESSAY
III.

THERE may be, likewise, and undoubtedly are some few Mysteries of another Kind in the *Mosaic* Dispensation: Such, I mean, as may seem, to some Apprehensions, not so easily reconcileable to the *moral* Attributes of GOD: Of which Kind there are *some* too, in the Constitution of the natural World. Now here in *Revelation*, as in *Nature*, 'tis the Part of human Reason to acquiesce in this *mysterious* and *unknown* Part, from what is *clear* and *known*^a. Of this Kind, perhaps, is the Expulsion of the *Canaanites* under *Joshua*, which the noble Writer hath taken such Pains to vilify^r. He might with as much Reason insult the Creator, for the Admission of *Storm*, *Famine*, or *Pestilence*. For as in *Nature*, so in *revealed* Religion, we are not to judge of the *whole* Constitution or Dispensation of Things, from *small* and *seeming* Exceptions: On the contrary, 'tis the Part of Wisdom to determine concerning these *seeming* Exceptions from a full View of the *whole* Dispensation. If *this* evidently tend to Good, the unprejudiced Inquirer into *Nature* and *Revelation* attributes the Doubt and Dark-

^a See above, § iv. of this *Essay*.
§ iii.

^r *Advice*, P. iii.

ness, which may involve any particular Part, to his own *Incapacity* and *Ignorance*. SECT.
VII.

And justly; for as the noble Writer hath told us on this very Occasion, “ In an *In-*
“ *finit*y of Things thus *relative*, a Mind,
“ which sees not *infinitely*, can see nothing
“ *fully*”.

LET us therefore, while as yet we see but
as through a Glass and darkly, contemplate
the Works of God with Reverence and Sub-
mission. Let us wait the happier Hour,
when *we shall know even as we are known* :
when we shall be raised to a more enlarged
Comprehension of our Creator’s immense
Designs; and the whole intelligent Crea-
tion shall joyn, in confessing and adoring
the unerring Rectitude of all his Dispen-
sations.

SECTION VIII.

HITHERTO we have seen the noble Writer buffooning and disgracing SECT.
VIII.
Christianity, from a false Representation of
its *material* Part: we shall now consider
what he hath thrown out against the *Com-*
position, *Style*, and *Manner* of the sacred

* *Mor.* Part ii. § iv.

B b 2

Scriptures;

ESSAY III. Scriptures; for on this too, he has thought it expedient to *point* his *Raillery*.

HE tells us, in the *ironical Tone*, “ that
 “ the Scriptural Descriptions, Narrations,
 “ Expressions, and Phrases, are in them-
 “ selves many Times exceedingly pleasant,
 “ entertaining, and facetious.—That our
 “ Saviour’s Style, — his Parables, Simi-
 “ lies, Comparisons, — his Exhortations to
 “ his Disciples, the Images under which
 “ he often couches his Morals and pruden-
 “ tial Rules — carry with them a certain
 “ *Festivity, Alacrity*, and good Humour
 “ so remarkable, that I should look upon
 “ it as impossible not to be mov’d in a *plea-*
 “ *sant Manner* at their Recital^t.” To
 these general Cavils he hath added a *Simile*
 in another Miscellany, which, as is usual
 with all fanciful Writers, is to stand for an
 Argument. He says “ ’tis no otherwise
 “ in the grammatical Art of Characters, and
 “ *painted Speech*, than in the Art of *Paint-*
 “ *ing* itself. I have seen, in certain Chris-
 “ tian Churches, an antient Piece or two,
 “ affirm’d on the solemn Faith of priestly
 “ Tradition, to have been angelically and
 “ divinely wrought, by a supernatural

^t *Misc.* ii. c. 3.

“ Hand and sacred Pencil. Had the Piece
 “ happen’d to be of a Hand like RAPHA-
 “ EL’S, I could have found nothing cer-
 “ tain to oppose to this Tradition. But
 “ having observed the whole *Style* and
 “ *Manner* of the pretended heavenly Work-
 “ manship to be so indifferent, as to vary
 “ in many Particulars from the Truth of
 “ Art, I presum’d within myself to beg
 “ Pardon of the Tradition, and assert con-
 “ fidently, that, if the Pencil had been
 “ *Heaven-guided*, it could never have been
 “ so *lame* in it’s Performance.” This in-
 genious Conceit, in the subsequent Para-
 graph, he very *clearly*, tho’ *slyly*, applies to
 the holy Scriptures.

’TIS the Province of *Wit* to form *Com-
 parisons*; of *Philosophy* to *detect* their *Weak-
 nesses*, when they are obtruded on us as a
Test of Truth. On Examination therefore
 I will venture to say, the noble Writer’s
Parallel will be found highly irregular and
 defective.

FOR there is an *essential* Difference be-
 tween *Paintings* and *Writing*, both in their
End and *Execution*. Paintings, with Re-
 gard to their End, are things of mere A-

ⁱ *Misc. v. c. 1.*

B b 3

musément

ESSAY
III.

musément and Taste : Consequently all their Value lies in the *Exquifiteness* of the *Art*, and the *fine Hand* of the Master. 'Tis likewise a Species of Art, that lies chiefly among the *Few* : the Bulk of Mankind (or in the noble Writer's more elegant Phrase, *the mere Vulgar*) being *incapable*, thro' a Want of *Leisure*, of gaining any Proficiency in this *Taste*; or of acquiring that curious Discernment in *Ordonnance*, *Drawing*, and *Colouring*, which is at once the Pride and Pleasure of the *Virtuoso-Tribe*.

BUT with Respect to Language the Affair is otherwise: Its *Ends* are *various*. From the Four different Kinds of literary Composition, as explained above*, there must arise a correspondent Variety of Style, the *Poetical*, the *Oratorical*, the *Historical*, and *Didactic*. The First of these Kinds alone partakes of the Nature of *Picture*, and therefore can alone be properly compared with it; as they are both referr'd to the *Imagination*, for the End of *Pleasure*: The other three Species of Composition, tending chiefly to *Utility*, by the Means of *Persuasion* or *Instruction*, draw their prime Value from *Plainness*, *Clearness*, and *Pre-*

* See *Essay*, i. § 3.

cision: From being adapted, not to the SECT. VIII. *Taste* of the *fastidious Critic*, but to the *Capacities* of those who are the intended Objects of *Persuasion* or *Instruction*. Here then, the noble Writer's Parallel is essentially defective: Since it was the Intention of *Providence*, in the sacred Scriptures, to condescend to what his Lordship's Quality and refined Wisdom intitle him to disdain, even to *instruct the mere Vulgar*: Whereas the End of *Painting*, is only the *Amusement of the Few*.

IN Regard to the *Execution*, we shall find as wide a Difference. There is, in Philosophical strictness, but one *unvary'd Language* or *Style in Painting*; which is "such a Modification of *Light* or *Colours* as "may imitate whatever Objects we find in "Nature." This consists not in the *Application* of *arbitrary Signs*; but hath it's Foundation in the *Senses* and *Reason* of Mankind; and is therefore *the same* in every Age and Nation. But in the literary *Style* or *Language*, the Matter is far otherwise. For Language being the *voluntary Application* of *arbitrary Signs*, according to the Consent of different Men and Nations, there is no *single uniform Model of Nature* to be

ESSAY followed. Hence *Gracefulness* or *Strength* of Style, *Harmony* or *Softness*, *copious* Expression, *terse* Brevity, or *contrasted* Periods, have by turns gained the Approbation of particular Countries. Now all these *supposed* Beauties of Speech are *relative*, *local*, and *capricious*; and consequently unworthy the Imitation of a divine Artist; who, to fit the Speech he *ordains*, to the great Work of *universal Instruction*, would, we may reasonably suppose, strip it of every *local*, *peculiar*, and *grotesque* Ornament; and convey it unaccompany'd by all, but the more *universal* Qualities common to every Tongue.

THE noble Writer, then, might with some shew of Reason have objected to the *Style* of Scripture, had the Writers boasted it's *Elegance*, as MAHOMET did that of his *Koran*, and defy'd all his Opposers to write any thing approaching it in this Respect. But the sacred Writers discover no *Design* or *Desire* of excelling as *fine* Writers: On the contrary, St. PAUL says, "they came not with the Power of human Speech," and gives a Reason for it which does Honour to his Mission.

THO'

'THO' this Scrutiny alone might be sufficient to detect and discredit the Wantonness of the noble Writer's Comparison; yet it will further lead us to a full Disclosure of the Truth; by shewing *that* to be the peculiar Characteristic of the Scripture *Composition*, which hath ever held the first Rank among the Qualities of human Writings; I mean, that of *unadorned* SIMPLICITY.

As much hath been said by many Writers on the Subject of *Simplicity*, with very little Precision; and particularly by the noble Writer, who seems to separate the *simple* Manner from the *Sublime*, as if they were *incompatible*^y; and indeed in his own Compositions preposterously deserts the *one*, when ever he attempts the *other*^z: It may be necessary here to fix the Idea of a *just* SIMPLICITY. This may be said to consist "in *Truth* and *Weight* of SENTIMENT, "cloathed in such IMAGES and STYLE, as "may most effectually *convey* it to the Reader's Mind." If any of these Circumstances be wanting; if the SENTIMENT be *false* or *trifling*, if the IMAGES or STYLE be such as tend rather to *fix the Attention on*

^y *Advice*, Part ii. § 2.
passim.

^z See the *Moralists*,

ESSAY *themselves*, that on the *Sentiment* they are
 III. employed to convey, the *just Simplicity* is destroyed. This, as might be proved by a large Induction of Particulars, is the Circumstance in which the best Critics of Antiquity placed the supreme Excellence of Writing. And, in this Use of the Term, it appears, that not only the *familiar*, the *narrative*, the *didactic*, but the *pathetic*, and *sublime* Manner too, are so far from being inconsistent with *Simplicity*, that they are then only in their Perfection, when *founded on it*.

'Tis true indeed, that the sacred Records are, as the noble Writer calls them, "*multifarious*, and of different Characters, "*varying according to the Situation, Intention, and natural Capacity of the Writers^a*." Yet amidst all this Variety of Manner, the reigning Quality of *Simplicity* is so *uniform* and *conspicuous*, that the boldest Enemy of *Christianity* will not be forward to hazard the Credit of his *Taste*, by calling it in Question.

If we examine them in this Light, we shall find, that, according to the Division made above^b, they consist of Four different Kinds, the *poetic*, *oratorical*, *historical*,

^a *Misc.* v. c. 1.

^b *Essays* i. § 3.

and *didactic* Forms. The poetic lies chiefly in the Book of *Psalms*, of *Job*, and several detached Passages in the *Prophets*, particularly of *Isaiab*. They contain many noble Efforts of *unmixed Poetry* or *pure Imitation*; yet *these*, being all centered in *one Intention*, that of *extolling* the Works, and celebrating the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of the *Deity*, do generally partake of the Character of *Eloquence*, being chiefly of the *lyric Kind*^c. In all these, the great Character of *Simplicity* is so strongly predominant, that every Attempt to *embellish* them, by adding the supernumerary Decorations of *Style in Translation*, hath ever been found to *weaken* and *debase* them.

As to the *oratorical* or *pathetic* Parts, innumerable might be produced, equal if not superior to any recorded by prophane Antiquity. In these, the leading Character of *Simplicity* is no less remarkable. Our SAVIOUR'S *Parables* and Exhortations are generally admirable in this Quality: Filled with unfeigned Compassion for the Weakness and Miseries of Man, they breathe nothing but the purest Benevolence. St. PAUL'S last Conversation with his Friends

^cSee *Essay* i. § 3.

ESSAY
III.

at *Ephesus*, on his Departure for *Jerusalem*^d; his Discourses on the *Resurrection* and on *Charity*; his Reproofs, his Commendations, his Apologies, especially that before *AGRIPPA*^e, are wrote in the noblest Strain of Simplicity. And as a perfect Model of this Kind, we may give the Story of *JOSEPH and his Brethren*, which for *Tenderness*, true *Pathos*, and unmixed Simplicity, is beyond Compare superior to any thing that appears in ancient Story.

BUT as the most important Part of Scripture lies in the *historical* and *preceptive* Part; especially in the *new Testament*, whence chiefly our Idea of *Duty* must be drawn; so we find this uniform and *simple* Manner eminently prevailing throughout, in every *Precept* and *Narration*. The History is conveyed in that artless Strain which alone could *adapt* it to the *Capacities* of all *Mankind*; the Precepts delivered by our SAVIOUR are drawn from the Principles of *common Sense*, improved by the most exalted Love of GOD and *Man*; and either expressed in clear and direct Terms, or couched under such *Images* and *Allusions*, as are every where to be found in *Nature*, such as are,

^d *Acts*, c. xx.

^e *Ib.* c. xxvi.

and *must* ever be universally known, and familiar to all Mankind^f; in which we may further observe, his Manner of teaching was greatly superior even to the noble Writer's justly applauded SOCRATES, who for the most part drew his *Images* and Allusions from the *less known* ARTS and MANNERS of the City^g. Through all this Variety of striking Allusion and moral Precept, the Style ever continues the same, *unadorned, simple*, and, even by the noble Writer's own Confession, "*vehement and majestic*^h;" yet never drawing the Reader's Attention on itself, but on the divine *Sentiments* it conveys.

To this we may further add, that these several Kinds of Composition are mixed and united with such Propriety and Force, as is scarce to be equalled in any other Writings. The poetical Parts are heightened by the great Strokes of *Eloquence* and *Precept*; the *pathetic*, by the noblest *Imagery*, and justest *Morals*; and the *preceptive* is strengthen-

^f See Newton on *Daniel*; — Mr. Jortin's *Discourses*; — Dr. Law's *Life of CHRIST*.

^g Not indeed without Reason; since his Design was *less extensive*, as he aimed not at the Instruction of all Mankind, but of the more literate Part of his Fellow-Citizens.

^h *Misc.* ii. c. 3.

ESSAY
III.

ed and inforced by all the Aids of *Poetry*, *Eloquence*, and *Parable*; calculated at once to engage the *Imagination*, to touch the *Passions*, and command the *Reason* of Mankind.

'Tis true, this unadorned *Simplicity* so conspicuous in the Scripture Composition; hath often given Offence to puerile Critics. The noble Writer hath but revived the Objection; it was weakly urged by CELSUS in the Infancy of the Christian Religionⁱ. At the Period when *Letters* revived in *Europe*, the *florid* Taste was so prevalent in *Italy*, under the Pontificate of LEO the Tenth, that the Composition of the Scriptures was on this Account held in general Contempt; and one of the fine Gentlemen in Literature^k, of those Days, is known to have declared, "that he dared not to read the *Bible*, lest it should *endanger his Style*." We may easily form a Judgment of the Taste of that Age from this one Circumstance, "that their most elaborate and celebrated Compositions were all wrote in a *dead Language*:" For thus they became mere *Imitators*, even to a

ⁱ Origen *contra Cels.* l. vii.

^k Cardinal PIETRO BEMBO.

Degree of *Servility*. And 'tis sufficient for the Defenders of the *Bible* to observe, that along with *it*, every other great Model of ancient Writing fell into the same Disgrace at the above-mentioned Period; while the general Taste and Attention was turned from Weight of *Sentiment*, and Strength of *Image* and *Expression*, to the *local* and *capricious* Decorations of *Style* and *Language*. But the Reign of this false Taste was of short Duration; so that for a long Time past, the comparative Merit of ancient Writers hath been *weighed* in a juster *Scale*.

Now if we examine the Writers whose Composition hath stood the Test of Ages, and obtained that highest Honour, "the concurrent Approbation of distant Times and Nations," we shall find that the Character of *Simplicity* is the *unvarying* Circumstance, which alone hath been able to gain this universal Homage from Mankind. Among the *Greeks*, whose Writers in general are of the *simple* Kind, the divinest Poet¹, the most commanding Orator^m, the finest Historianⁿ, and deepest Philosopher^o, are, above the rest, conspicuously eminent in this great Quality. The *Roman* Writers

¹ Homer. ^m Demosthenes. ⁿ Xenophon. ^o Aristotle.
rise

ESSAY rise towards Perfection according to that
 III. Measure of true *Simplicity* which they mingle in their Works. Indeed they are all inferior to the *Greek Models*. But who will deny, that LUCRETIUS; HORACE; VIRGIL; LIVY; TERENCE, TULLY, are at once the *simplest* and *best* of *Roman Writers*? Unless we add the noble *Annalist* ^P, who appeared in after times; who, notwithstanding the *political Turn* of his Genius, which sometimes *interferes*, is admirable in this great Quality; and by it, far superior to his Contemporaries. 'Tis this one Circumstance that hath raised the venerable DANTE, the Father of modern Poetry, above the succeeding Poets of his Country, who could never long maintain the *local* and *temporary* Honours bestowed upon them; but have fallen under that just Neglect, which *Time* will ever decree to those who desert a *just Simplicity* for the *florid* Colourings of Style, contrasted Phrases, affected Conceits, the mere *Trappings* of Composition, and *Gothic MINUTIÆ* ^Q.

^P Tacitus.

^Q Even their most applauded Poet, the famed TORQUATO TASSO, runs so often into this *little Manner*, that nothing but the reigning false Taste of the Age in which he lived, if indeed even *that*, can plead his
 'Tis

'Tis this hath given to BOILEAU the most lasting Wreath in *France*; to SHAKESPEAR and MILTON in *England*; especially to the last, whose Writings are more *unmixed* in this Respect; and who had formed himself entirely on the *simple* Model of the best *Greek* Writers, and the *sacred* Scriptures^r.

Excuse. The great *Portuguese* Genius, CAMOENS, to whose *Lusiade* TASSO hath been much obliged, was much less faulty in this Particular, tho' he and the *Italian* were nearly Contemporaries.

^rMr. DRYDEN somewhere observes "that MILTON never sinks so far below himself, as when he falls on *some Track of Scripture*." 'Tis equally true, that he never rises so far above himself, as when he falls on *some Track of Scripture*. 'Tis easy to guess what was the Drift of Mr. DRYDEN's Remark. But the Observations made above (*Essay* 1. § 3.) will easily reconcile these seeming Contradictions. When MILTON adopts the *poetical* Parts of Scripture, he rises above himself: But by an *injudicious Application* of the *historical* or *didactic* Parts, he often falls indeed.

THIS naturally leads us to an Observation on Mr. HUME's *Essay on Simplicity and Refinement in Writing*. He hath attempted to fix a certain *Union* of these two Qualities, which, he says, constitutes the most perfect Form of Composition. It were to be wished he had given us some better *Reasons* in support of this *Opinion*, which itself seems to be a mere *Refinement*. The Progress of his Argument is remarkable.—He draws all his Instances from *Poets*; and having given some Examples of Poets who are both *simple* and *unpoetical* in the Extreme, he arbitrarily throws the Censure on the too great Degree of *Simplicity*, instead of fixing it where he ought, *viz.* on the too great

ESSAY
III.

As it appears from these Instances, that *Simplicity* is the only universal Characteristic of just Writing; so the superior Eminence of the sacred Scriptures in this prime Quality hath been generally acknowledged. One of the greatest Critics in Antiquity, himself conspicuous in the *sublime* and *simple* Manner, hath born this Testimony to the Writings of MOSES and St. PAUL: And by Parity of Reason we must conclude, that, had he been conversant with the other sacred Writers, his *Taste* and *Candour* would have allowed them the same Encomium.

Mixture of the *historical*, *oratorical*, or *argumentative* Species. In Proof of this, we need only alledge the Examples of HOMER, PINDAR, and CALLIMACHUS, where *Simplicity*, and at the same Time *Sublimity* and the *true poetic Forms*, are in their last *Perfection*. Thus all he proves is, “that a *Poet* ought not to be “*unpoetical*.”—Next he puts VIRGIL and RACINE on a *Level*, as having attained the nearest to this *imagined Union* of *Simplicity* and *Refinement*. Here he obligeth us again to call his *Taste* in Question: For every Page of RACINE is full of *Turns*, both of *Phrase* and *Sentiment*: Whereas we scarce meet with three Instances of this Kind in all VIRGIL’s Writings.—He then gives us his Idea of *Simplicity*: “Those Compositions which have the Recommendation of *Simplicity*, have *nothing surprizing* in the Thought, “when divested of that *Elegance of Expression*, and “*Harmony of Numbers*, with which it is cloathed.”—From these extraordinary *Premises*, we are naturally prepared to expect his *Conclusion*, “that CATULLUS “and PARNEL are his *favourite Authors*!”

* Longinus.

BUT

BUT we need not have Recourse to Authorities, for the Proof of the superior Weight and Dignity of the sacred Scriptures, in this great Quality. 'Tis evident to Demonstration from the following Circumstance. It hath been often observed, even by Writers of no mean Rank, that "the Scriptures suffer in their Credit by "the *Disadvantage* of a *literal Version*, "while other ancient Writings enjoy the " *Advantage* of a *free and embellished Trans-* " *lation.*" But in Reality these Gentlemen's Concern is ill-placed and groundless. For the Truth is, "That most other Writings are indeed *impaired* by a *literal Trans-* " *lation*; whereas, giving only a due Regard to the *Idioms* of different Languages, "the sacred Writings when *literally trans-* " *lated*, are then in their full Perfection." Now this is an *internal* Proof, that in all other Writings there is a Mixture of *local, relative, exterior* Ornament; which is often lost in the Transfusion from one Language to another. But the *internal* Beauties which depend not on the *particular* Construction of *Tongues*, no *Change* of *Tongue* can destroy. Hence the *Bible-Composition* preserves its native Beauty and Strength,

ESSAY alike in every Language, by the sole Ener-
 III. gy of unadorned Phrase, natural Images,
 Weight of Sentiment, and *great Simplicity*.

'Tis, in this Respect, like a rich Vein of *Gold*, which, under the severest Trials of Heat, Cold, and Moisture, retains its original *Weight* and *Splendor*, without either Loss or Alloy; while baser Metals are corrupted by Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and assimilated to the various Elements thro' which they pass.

THIS Circumstance then may be justly regarded as sufficient to vindicate the Composition of the sacred Scriptures; as it is at once their chief *Excellence*, and greatest *Security*. 'Tis their *Excellence*, as it renders them *intelligible* and *useful to all*; 'tis their *Security*, as it prevents their being disguised by the *false* and *capricious* Ornaments of *vain* or *weak Translators*.

WE may safely appeal to Experience and Fact for the Confirmation of these Remarks on the superior Simplicity, Utility, and Excellence of the Style of holy Scripture. Is there any Book in the World, so perfectly adapted to all Capacities? that contains such *sublime* and *exalting* Precepts, convey'd
 in

in such an *artless* and *intelligible* Strain? that can be read with such Pleasure and Advantage, by the lettered *Sage* and the unlettered *Peasant*? To whom then would the noble Writer send Mankind for religious and moral Instruction? To the divine PLATO, it may be supposed; or, more probably, to the *inraptured* Strains of PHILOCLES and THEOCLES. And sure, Mankind must reap much Instruction and Advantage from the *puffed Epitaphs* and *fuslian Style* of a *philosophical Romance*. We may reasonably hope indeed, soon to see (nay, do we not already see?) the happy Effects of this high Discipline. For in Fact, the noble Writer's *Characteristics* are now the standing *Oracle* in the *Office*, the *Shop*, nay, as I am informed, sometimes even in the *Cobler's Stall*. We need not wonder therefore, that in these new Habitations of *Taste*, *sublimed Phrase*, and *abstruse Philosophy*, the *simple* Strains of the Gospel are *damned* and *discarded*.

To return then to the noble Writer's Comparison (if indeed we have departed from it) these united Observations may convince us, that the only Circumstance in Painting, which can with any Propriety be compared to literary *Style*, is that of

ESSAY
III.

Colouring. And on this Principle we may further confirm all that hath been said on the superior Excellence of the *simple* Manner. For 'tis well known, and the noble Writer knew it, that, while the Masters in this fine Art confined the Pencil to the genuine Forms of *Grace* and *Greatness*, and only superadded to these the temperate Embellishments of a *chastised* and *modest* Colouring, the Art grew towards its *Perfection*: but no sooner was their Attention turned from *Truth*, *Simplicity*, and *Design*, to the gaudy Decorations of a rich and luscious *Colouring*, than their Credit declined with their Art: and the experienced Eye, which contemplates the *old* Pictures with *Admiration*, surveys the *modern* with Indifference or *Contempt*.

To conclude. We see there are two Kinds of *Composition*, essentially opposed to each other. The *one* turns the Attention on *itself*; the *other*, on *the Truths it conveys*. The first may be justly compared to a *Sun-Beam* playing on the *Surface* of the Water, which *attracts* and *dazzles* the Beholder's Eye by its own *useless Splendor*. The last is like a *Sun-Beam* darting to the Bottom; which, while itself is *unseen*, or *unobserved*,

unobserved, communicates its Brightness, and SECT.
VIII.
illuminates every Object on which it falls.

How far the *first* of these may belong to the noble Writer, let others determine. 'Tis sufficient to have proved, that the *last* is the *unvaried* Style and Manner of the *sacred Scriptures*.

SECTION IX.

IT would have been strange, had his SECT.
IX
Lordship emptied so much of his Gall on *Christianity*, without bestowing a Share on its *Ministers*. It may therefore be expected, that something should be said on his Treatment of the *English Clergy*.

So far as his Spirit of Satire may have been provoked by the persecuting and intolerant Principles of some of the *Clergy* in his Time, 'tis highly commendable. It matters not in what Rank, Order, or Profession, the Enemies of *Freedom* may appear. What Shape or Pretence soever they may assume, 'tis a work of true Charity to stigmatize and disgrace them, as the Enemies of Mankind.

BUT it appears too evidently, that the noble Writer's *Spleen* arose from another Foundation. For his Satire is not so much

ESSAY
III.

pointed against them, as being the *Enemies of Freedom*, as the *Friends of Christianity*. With a view of disgracing them in this Regard, he hath ridiculed and abused their *Writings*, their *Preaching*, and even their *Persons*. It will only be necessary to select a few Instances of this kind, from an infinite Number; in all which, the *Delicacy* of the *Raillery* is so *conspicuous*, as to need no *Illustration*.

IN his *Soliloquy*, he hath paid his Compliments to the *Writings* of the *Clergy*, under the Title of “Candidates for Authorship of the sanctify’d Kind.” “These, he says, may be termed a sort of *Pseudo-Ascetics*, who can have no real Converse either with themselves or with Heaven.” — “And although the Books of this sort, by a common Idiom, are called *good Books*, the Authors for certain are a *sorry Race*” — “*A Saint-Author, of all Men least values Politeness*.—He is above the Consideration of that, which, in a narrow Sense, we call *Manners*: nor is he apt to examine any other Faults, than those which he calls *Sins*†.”

† *Solil. Part i. § 1.*

THUS

THUS he deals with the Clergy, when SECT. IX.
 they are *dull* enough to write *seriously* on
 the most *interesting Subjects*. But if any
 of the Order happens to fall into a gayer
 turn of Composition, the Charge is re-
 newed under another Form. Then, “the
 “ *burlesque* Divinity grows mightily in
 “ vogue; and the cry’d up Answers to He-
 “ terodox Discourses are generally such as
 “ are written in Drollery — Joy to the Re-
 “ verend Authors, who can afford to be
 “ thus gay, and condescend to correct us in
 “ this *Lay-Wit*.”

THEIR *Preaching* is another standing Sub-
 ject of Derision: and ridiculed they must
 be, whether they *divide* their Discourse, or
divide it not. If the first, then the follow-
 ing stroke of Raillery is prepar’d for them:
 “ Come we now (as our *authentic Rhetori-*
 “ *cians* express themselves) to our *second*
 “ *Head*.” If the latter, then “our reli-
 “ gious *Pastors* have changed their Manner
 “ of distributing to us their *Spiritual Food*.
 “ —they have run into the more savory
 “ way of *learned Ragout* and *Medley*. The
 “ elegant Court-Divine exhorts in *Miscel-*

* *Misc.* v. c. 2.* *Misc.* ii. c. 3.“ *lany,*

ESSAY "lany, and is ashamed to bring his Two's
 III. "and Three's before a fashionable Assem-
 bly."

The *Defenders* of *Christianity* are baited in their Turn. "For Example, let a
 "zealous Divine and flaming Champion of
 "our Faith, when inclined to shew him-
 "self in Print, make choice of some tre-
 "mendous Mystery of Religion, opposed
 "heretofore by some damnable Heresiarch."
 — "A Ring is made, and Readers gather
 "in Abundance. Every one takes Party
 "and encourages his own Side." "This
 "shall be my Champion! — This Man for my
 "Money! — Well hit on our Side! — Again,
 "a good Stroke! — There he was even with
 "him! — Have at him next Bout! — Ex-
 "cellent Sport!"

The same familiar Elegance of Com-
 position, joined with a surprising Effort
 in the noble Writer's own Sublime, runs
 through the following Paragraph; where
 he compares a Controversy in Divinity, to
 a Match at Foot-Ball. "So have I known
 "a crafty Glazier, in time of Frost, pro-
 "cure a FOOT-BALL, to draw into the
 "Street the emulous Chiefs of the robust

^y Misc. ii. c. 3.

^z Misc. i. c. 2.

"Youth.

“ *Youth*. The *tumid Bladder* bounds at SECT.
IX.
 “ every KICK, *bursts* the *withstanding*
 “ CASEMENTS, the *Chassys*, *Lanterns*, and
 “ all the *brittle vitreous WARE*. The
 “ *Noise* of *Blows* and *Out-cries* fills the
 “ WHOLE NEIGHBOURHOOD; and the
 “ Ruins of *Glass* cover the *stony Pavements*:
 “ till the *bloated battering Engine*, *subdued*
 “ by Force of FOOT and FIST, and *yield-*
 “ *ing up its Breath* at many a *fatal CRAN-*
 “ NY, becomes lank and harmless, sinks
 “ in its Flight, and can no longer uphold
 “ the Spirit of the contending Parties^a.

NOT content with these *severe Strokes* of
 Raillery, the noble Writer prepares a more
 deadly Blow at the Clergy; even no less
 than ruining their Fortunes among the
Fair-Sex. And here the discerning Rea-
 der will readily guess, that his Ridicule
 must be needs levelled at their *Persons*.
 He introduces, or drags in, the Story of
 OTHELLO and DESDEMONA; represents the
 one as a *miraculous* Story-teller, the other
 as a *credulous* Hearer. He then adds,
 “ But why the Poet, amongst his *Greek*
 “ Names, should have chosen one which
 “ denoted the Lady *superstitious*, I can't

^a *Misc. i. c. 2.*

“ imagine;

ESSAY

III.

“ imagine ; unless, as Poets are sometimes
 “ Prophets too, he should figuratively, un-
 “ der this dark Type, have represented to
 “ us, that, about a hundred Years after his
 “ Time, the Fair Sex of this Island should,
 “ by *other monstrous Tales*, be so seduced, as
 “ to turn their Favour chiefly on the *Tale-*
 “ *Tellers* ; and change their natural Inclination
 “ for fair, *candid*, and *courteous*
 “ *Knights*, into a Passion for a *mysterious*
 “ *Race of black Enchanters* ^b.”

I CANNOT think this *elegant* Passage deserves a particular Reply. 'Tis supposed, the noble Writer designed it only as a Proof, “ That the *Saint-Author* of all Men *least* “ *values Politeness* ;” as a Proof how *incapable* he was of *violating his own Rule*, or exercising any Degree of “ that *gross* sort of “ *Raillery*, which is so *offensive in good Com-*
 “ *pany* ^c.”

Indeed all the *delicate* Paragraphs here cited are much of the same Nature ; and afford an undeniable Proof, how great a Master his Lordship was, in the true *refined* Manner of *Attic* Wit. I shall only add, that if, according to the noble Writer's projected Scheme of Confutation, the

^b *Solil.* Part ii. § 3.

^c *Wit. and H.* Part i. § 2.

English Clergy should ever be *baited* in the way of *Puppet-show* at *Bart'l'mew-Fair*; I would recommend the above Passages, with many parallel ones in the *Characteristics*, to the Managers of the *Drama*; as being admirably suited to the *Genius* of their wooden DROLE, whether he should chuse to *swagger* in the *Sock*, or *strut* in the *Buskin*.

WERE the Clergy disposed to return these Compliments *in Kind*, it may be questioned whether his Lordship's Admirers would acquit them of *coarse Manners*. But however some of that Body may *blindly hate*, and others as *blindly admire* the Author of the *Characteristics*; yet the best and wisest of the Profession, so far as I have been able to learn from their Conversation, would probably rather chuse to return his Salutations in the following Manner:

‘ Notwithstanding the superior Airs of
 ‘ *Contempt*, which on all Occasions your
 ‘ Lordship is pleased to assume, we cannot
 ‘ think you of such Ability, as you seem to
 ‘ appear in your own Eyes: neither can we
 ‘ think this overweening Opinion of your-
 ‘ self, this Disdain of all who adopt not
 ‘ your peculiar Tenets, is any Proof of real
 ‘ Wisdom, since yourself have taught us
 ‘ to

ESSAY ' to believe, "*that as we grow wiser, we*
 III. "*shall prove less conceited.*" Though we
 ' scorn to *revile* you, yet we judge our-
 ' selves *well intitled* to tell you *the Truth* on
 ' every Subject. We regard, therefore, a
 ' fine *Imagination*, an extensive *Knowledge*,
 ' and a commanding *Judgment*, as three
 ' Qualities independent of each other. In
 ' the first, we think you *eminent*; in the
 ' second, *considerable*; in the last, we must
 ' be excused, if we think you *neither emi-*
 ' *nent nor considerable*: And on this Account
 ' we can allot you *no high Rank*, in the Scale
 ' of *true Genius*. Suitable to this, your
 ' *Taste* in *Arts* is much superior to your
 ' *Talents* for *Philosophy*. The only *Chain*
 ' of *Reasoning* you have exhibited, is found
 ' in your *Enquiry concerning Virtue*: nor is
 ' even this fastened to the *Throne of Truth*,
 ' but hangs trembling from a *shadowy* and
 ' *aerial* Fabric, blown up by a sportive
 ' Imagination. You have indeed obtained
 ' the Character of an *original Writer* in *Phi-*
 ' *losophy*: how little you deserve this must
 ' needs be known to all who are versed in
 ' the *Greek Schools*; for thence the *rational*
 ' *Part* of your System is chiefly drawn.
 ' What you *borrow*, you often *embellish*,
 ' some-

‘ sometimes *disguise*, never *strengthen* : but SECT.
IX.
 ‘ when you attempt to become *original*,
 ‘ you only convince us how ill qualified
 ‘ you are for such a Task. Accordingly,
 ‘ we find in the general turn of your Writ-
 ‘ ings, *meagre Sentiments* studiously adorned
 ‘ by a *glare* of *Words*, and a *waste* of *Ima-*
 ‘ *gery* : with these you amuse the common
 ‘ Reader ; like the unqualified Painter, who,
 ‘ unable to reach the Beauties of a just and
 ‘ *vigorous Expression*, covers a lifeless Fi-
 ‘ gure with *gaudy Draperies*. And we
 ‘ cannot but think, that, had you studied the
 ‘ Writings of that great and excellent Man
 ‘ whom you so weakly deride^d, your Vo-
 ‘ lumes, whatever they had lost in *Bulk*,
 ‘ would have gained in *Weight* and *Splendor*.

‘ WITH regard to the Buffoonries, which
 ‘ you have occasionally exercised on Chri-
 ‘ stianity, in what you call “ *your Random*
 ‘ “ *Essays* ;” they are so much below the
 ‘ Character of *the Philosopher*, that it is
 ‘ matter of Surprise to us, that you could
 ‘ think they can become the *Man of Wit*.
 ‘ It is true, among those whom you most
 ‘ despise, the *mere Vulgar*, they have gained
 ‘ you the Character of an *inimitable Author* ;

^d Mr. Locke. See Advice, &c. Part iii. § 1.

‘ among

ESSAY
III.

‘ among Readers of that Rank “ *who are*
 “ *ready to swallow any low Drollery or*
 “ *Jest;*” among those whom you have else-
 ‘ where described, “ *who, while they pre-*
 “ *tend to such a Scrutiny of other Evidences,*
 “ *are the readiest to take the Evidence of*
 “ *the greatest Deceivers in the World, their*
 “ *own Passions^e.*” But whatever these
 ‘ Passages may be in their *Consequences*, we
 ‘ cannot but think them, in their own *Na-*
 ‘ *ture*, even *contemptible*. For, to use your
 ‘ own *Attic Phrase*, “ *to twitch, snap, snub*
 “ *up, or banter, to torture Sentences and*
 “ *Phrases, and turn a few Expressions into*
 “ *Ridicule, is not sufficient to constitute*
 “ *what is properly esteemed a Writer^f.*”
 ‘ On this Account we look upon these
 ‘ boasted Passages in your Book, to be of
 ‘ that Kind which are calculated only “ *to*
 “ *create Diversion to those who look no fur-*
 “ *ther^g;*” and in which, as you elsewhere
 ‘ observe, “ *the most confused Head, if*
 “ *fraught with a little Invention, and pro-*
 “ *vided with Common-Place-Book Learning,*
 “ *may exert itself to as much Advantage,*
 “ *as the most orderly and well-settled Judg-*
 “ *ment^h.*” We cannot therefore express any

^e *Mor. P. ii. § 1.* ^f *Misc. v. c. 2.* ^g *Misc. i. c. 1.* ^h *Ibid.*

‘ Esteem

‘ Esteem either for the *Scurrilities* of the SECT.
 ‘ *coarse* JESTER, or the *trim Delicacy* and IX.
 ‘ *Self-Admiration* of the *literary* NARCIS-
 ‘ SUS.

‘ BUT, *my Lord*, there lies a heavier
 ‘ Charge against you, than that of *bad Writ-*
 ‘ *ing*. We mean, the *Indecency* and *Immo-*
 ‘ *rality* of your *Conduct*, in your *Manner* of
 ‘ attacking *Christianity*. You would be
 ‘ thought a *Lover* of your *Country*; yet
 ‘ you pour *Contempt* upon its *Laws* and *In-*
 ‘ *stitutions*. You allow the *Propriety* of a
 ‘ *religious Establishment*; yet you take every
 ‘ Occasion to *deride* it. You contend for a
 ‘ *public Leading* in Religion; yet you per-
 ‘ petually insinuate, that Mankind are *led by*
 ‘ *the Nose*. You say, “*The Public ought*
 ‘ *not to be insulted to its Face*;” yet your
 ‘ Writings are one *continued Insult* upon its
 ‘ *Opinions*. Our excellent and unrivaled
 ‘ Constitution allows a perfect *Freedom* of
 ‘ *Enquiry*; had you then argued *ingenuously*
 ‘ *and fairly* against *Christianity*, without
 ‘ attempting *Ridicule*; whatever Opinion
 ‘ we might have entertained of your *Head*,
 ‘ we might at least have thought favourably
 ‘ of your *Heart*. But in direct Opposition
 ‘ to this Rule, you always *ridicule*, scarce

ESSAY

III.

' ever *argue* ; you endeavour to instil *illegal*
 ' *Opinions*, without bringing any Evidence
 ' to support either their *Usefulness* or *Truth* :
 ' You give these *crude Buffoonries* to the
 ' World in *Print* ; and is not this *insulting*
 ' *the Public to its Face* ? — In this Instance,
 ' we must think you *a bad Citizen* ; and to
 ' be ranked among those, whom a Writer,
 ' by no Means prejudiced in Favour of Re-
 ' ligion, thus justly stigmatizes : “ *Who I*
 ' *hardly know for what End, have written*
 ' *against the Religion of their Country, and*
 ' *without pretending to substitute any thing*
 ' *better, or more practicable, in its Place,*
 ' *would deprive us of our happy Establish-*
 ' *ment, merely, as it should seem, for the*
 ' *Pleasure of pulling down and doing Mis-*
 ' *chief*.” Besides this, *my Lord*, we must
 ' take the Liberty to say, that you betray such
 ' frequent Marks of *Insincerity* and *designed*
 ' *Misrepresentation* in your Treatment of
 ' *Christianity*, as but ill consists with that
 ' *Reverence* which you owe to *Truth* and
 ' to *yourself* ; such as becomes not *a MAN*,
 ' much less a *Man* whom the Public Con-
 ' sent hath distinguished by the Title of
 ' RIGHT HONOURABLE.

' *Enquiry into Homer's Life and Writings*, § 6.

' WHAT

‘ WHAT your particular Motives may have S E C T.
IX.
 ‘ been to this Treatment of *Christianity*, you
 ‘ best know. The most *excusable Tempta-*
 ‘ *tion* to this strange Conduct, that we can
 ‘ assign, must have been the *natural Preva-*
 ‘ *lence* of *Spleen*. For, as you observe, “ *all*
 ‘ *splenetic People have a necessary Propen-*
 ‘ *sity to Criticism and Satire.*” — “ *The*
 ‘ *Spirit of Satire rises with the ill Mood; and*
 ‘ *the chief Passion of Men thus diseased and*
 ‘ *thrown out of good Humour, is to find Fault,*
 ‘ *censure, unravel, confound, and leave no-*
 ‘ *thing without Exception and Controversy*”^k.

‘ FAR be it from us to derogate from
 ‘ your *private Virtues*; tho’ we cannot but
 ‘ wish, that in your Treatment of *Christia-*
 ‘ *nity*, you had given better Proofs of that
 ‘ *universal Charity*, which you so warmly
 ‘ *profess*; even while you are reviling *that*
 ‘ *Religion* where alone it is to be found.—
 ‘ There is another Circumstance, that sure
 ‘ the more humane Part of your Admirers
 ‘ would hesitate upon; we mean, that *ex-*
 ‘ *treme Contempt* you express for those you
 ‘ call the *mere Vulgar*. Your Regard seems
 ‘ solely centered in establishing your *peculiar*
 ‘ *System* among those you call “ Men of

^k *Misc.* ii. c. 3.

ESSAY
 III. “*Fashion and Breeding;*” while you give up
 ‘*the Vulgar*, that is (to speak with due Re-
 ‘verence of the Works of GOD) the Bulk of
 ‘your *Fellow-Creatures*, as a proper Prey to
 ‘the supposed Delusions and Tyranny of
 ‘those, whom you brand as the Enemies
 ‘of Mankind. How this *Contempt* for the
 ‘greatest Part of your *Species* can consist
 ‘with true *Virtue* or *Charity*, we are at a
 ‘Loss to comprehend. ’Tis certain, *Chri-*
 ‘*stianity* would have taught you otherwise.
 ‘Nay, *my Lord*, a great *Roman*, as much
 ‘your Superior in *Station*, as in *Genius* and
 ‘*active Virtue*, would have told you, “that
 “true Goodness extends itself to the *Mul-*
 “*titude*; that *Virtue* is not disdainful or
 “proud; but regards all Ranks of Men,
 “and consults their Welfare; which it
 “could not do, if it *despised the Vulgar*¹.”
 ‘*Christianity* hath nobly heightened this
 ‘Principle; and recommends the *Weak*, the
 ‘*Poor*, the *Ignorant*, as the proper Objects
 ‘not only of our *Charity*, but *Instruction*.
 ‘And however mortifying it may be to
 ‘proud Minds, we must say, that we fre-
 ‘quently meet with Men in the lower Ranks
 ‘of Life, sometimes even in *Cities*, often

¹ Cicero, *Læl.*

‘ in Cottages, who when *instructed* in the S E C T.
 ‘ Principles of true *Christianity*, are superior IX.
 ‘ in *Knowledge, Worth, and Happiness*, to
 ‘ those who hold them in Contempt.

‘ WITH Regard to your Treatment of
 ‘ *ourselves* : It gives us no Concern. For
 ‘ in one word, Calumnies thrown on whole
 ‘ Bodies of Men, are *unmeaning* and *self-*
 ‘ *confuted*. “ You may therefore proceed
 “ in your *Invectives* ; bestowing as free
 “ Language of that Kind, as your *Charity*
 “ and superior *Breeding* will permit. You
 “ may liberally deal your *courtly Compliments*
 “ and *Salutations* in what Dialect you think
 “ fit ; since for our own Part, neither the
 “ Names of *Bigots, Impostors, Pedants, For-*
 “ *malists, Gladiatorian Penmen, Flaming*
 “ *Champions of the Faith, Black Tribe, or*
 “ *Black Enchanters^m*, will in the least scan-
 “ dalize us, while the Sentence comes only
 “ from *the Enemies of our Master*. On the
 “ contrary, we rather strive with ourselves
 “ to suppress whatever Vanity might natu-
 “ rally arise in us, from such Favour be-
 “ stowed. For whatever may, in the Bot-
 “ tom, be intended us, by such a Treatment,

^m Names bestowed on the English Clergy throughout
 the *Characteristics*.

ESSAY " 'tis impossible for us to term it other than
 III.

" *Favour* ; since there are certain *Enmities*,
 " which it will be ever esteemed a real Ho-
 " nour *to have merited*ⁿ."

' You have indeed wisely and artfully
 ' endeavoured to *intimidate* us from expof-
 ' ing the Folly of your *Insults* on *Religion*
 ' and *Christianity* ; by representing fuch an
 ' Attempt as being in itfelf *Contemptible*.
 ' For thus you are pleased to fpeak: " *It*
 " *must be owned, that when a Writer of any*
 " *Kind is fo confiderable as to deferve the*
 " *Labour and Pains of fome fhrewd Heads*
 " *to refute him in Public, he may, in the*
 " *Quality of an Author, be juftly congra-*
 " *tulated on that Occafion. 'Tis fupposed*
 " *necessarily, that he must have writ with*
 " *some kind of Ability or Wit*^o."

' To obviate this Remark, is the only fur-
 ' ther Trouble we fhall give your Lordship
 ' on the prefent Occafion. And here, without
 ' any particular Application to yourfelf, we
 ' must beg Leave to offer the plain Reason
 ' why we think your Obfervation, however
 ' plaufible and commonly received, is yet
 ' entirely groundlefs. Indeed, with regard
 ' to Writings of mere *Speculation* or *Criti-*

ⁿ See *Misc.* v. c. 3.

^o *Misc.* i. c. 2.

' *cism*,

‘ *cism*, which affect not the Happiness of SECT.
IX.
 ‘ Mankind, “ if Authors write ill they are
 “ despised” and forgotten. At least, as
 ‘ the *Satirist* observes, they ought to be so^p:
 ‘ And on this Account, many Parts of the
 ‘ *Characteristics* will, probably, pass for ever
 ‘ *uncensured* by us.

‘ BUT there are other Kinds of bad
 ‘ Writing, which will ever bid fair to *live*
 ‘ and be *admired*, We mean, such as *mini-*
 ‘ *ster* to the *low Passions* and *Vices* of Man-
 ‘ kind; among which, RIDICULE *on* RE-
 ‘ LIGION is of all others the most favourite
 ‘ Topic. And even where these Affections
 ‘ do not prevail, the Generality of Men, thro’
 ‘ the Weakness of Nature, are easily misled
 ‘ in Matters even of the nearest Concern-
 ‘ ment, by *Sophistry* or *Buffoonry*; by a
 ‘ *Hint*, a *Sarcasm*, or an *Allusion*. Now in
 ‘ this Case, ’tis surely a proper and *rational*,
 ‘ tho’ perhaps no *easy* Task, to *detect* *Misre-*
 ‘ *presentation*, and lead Mankind back again
 ‘ to the Paths of *Truth* and *Happiness*. For
 ‘ the Effects of *Ridicule* on the *Mind*, re-

⁂ *Quel Démon vous irrite, & vous porte à médire ?*
Un Livre vous déplaît : Qui vous force à le lire ?
Laissez mourir un Fat dans son Obscurité.
Un Auteur ne peut il pourrir en Sûreté ?

Boileau, Sat. ix.

408. *On Revealed RELIGION, etc.*

ESSAY
III.

‘semble those of *Venom* on the *Body*; which,
‘tho’ struck into the Blood by a *puny Rep-*
‘*tile*, may yet demand, nay even baffle, the
‘Power of the *strongest Medicines*. How
‘then can you affirm that an Effect of this
‘Kind “*implies either Ability or Wit,*” if
‘*Buffoonry* and *Sophistry* can do the Bu-
‘siness? And that they may, we have your
‘Lordship’s *full Acknowledgement*; for, to
‘adopt and conclude with your own Ex-
‘pression, “*In the same Manner as a MA-*
“*LICIOUS CENSURE*, craftily worded and
“*pronounced with ASSURANCE*, is apt to
“*pass with Mankind for SHREWD WIT*;
“*so a VIRULENT (or a VISIONARY) MAX-*
“*IM*, in bold Expressions, tho’ without any
“*JUSTNESS of Thought*, is readily received
“*for TRUE PHILOSOPHY*.”

^a *Moralists*, P. ii. § 5.

F I N I S.



